

“Thirty Years Ago:”

OR

REMINISCENCES OF THE EARLY DAYS

OF

COFFEE PLANTING

IN

CEYLON.

BY

P. D. MILLIE.

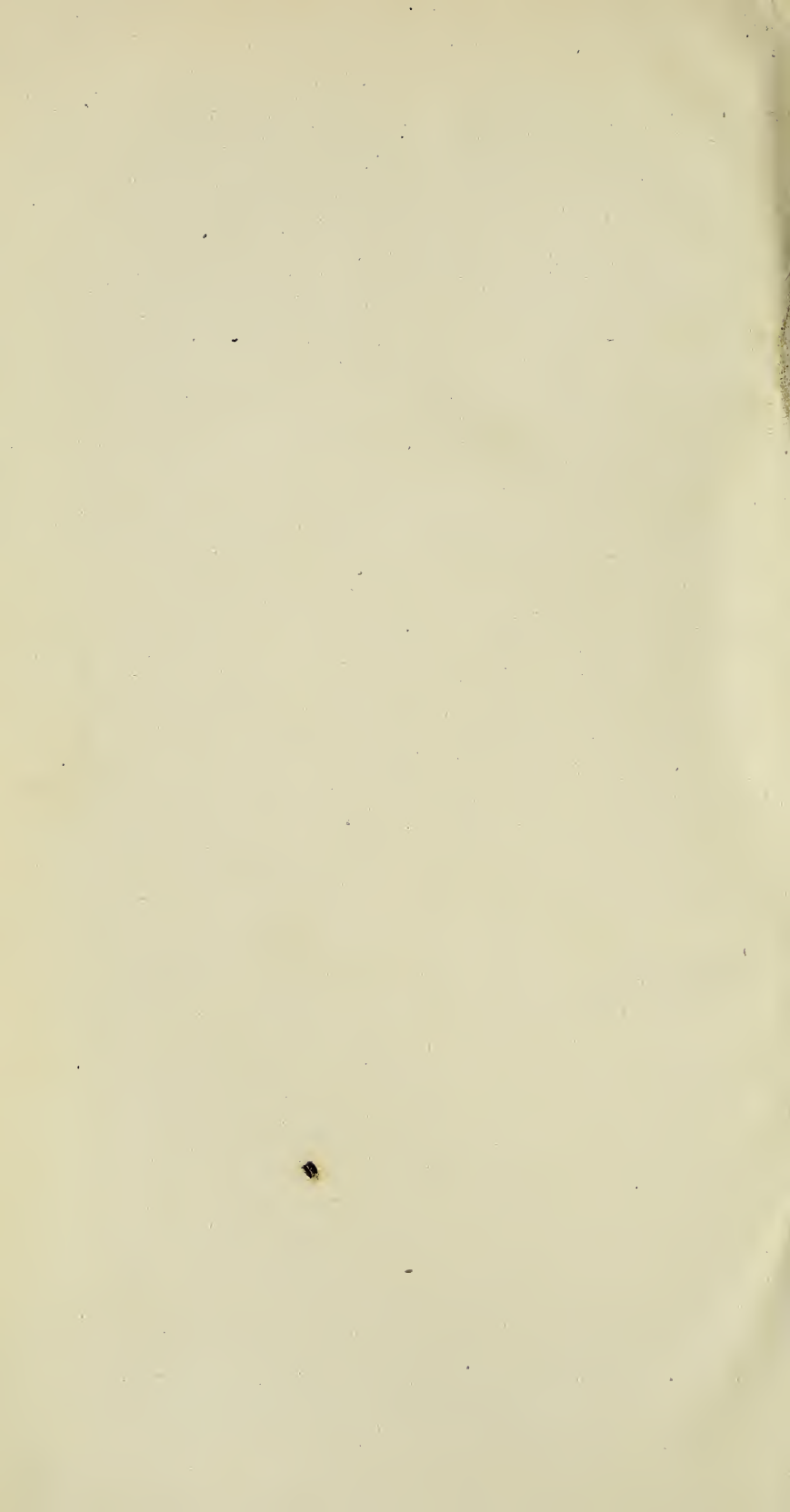
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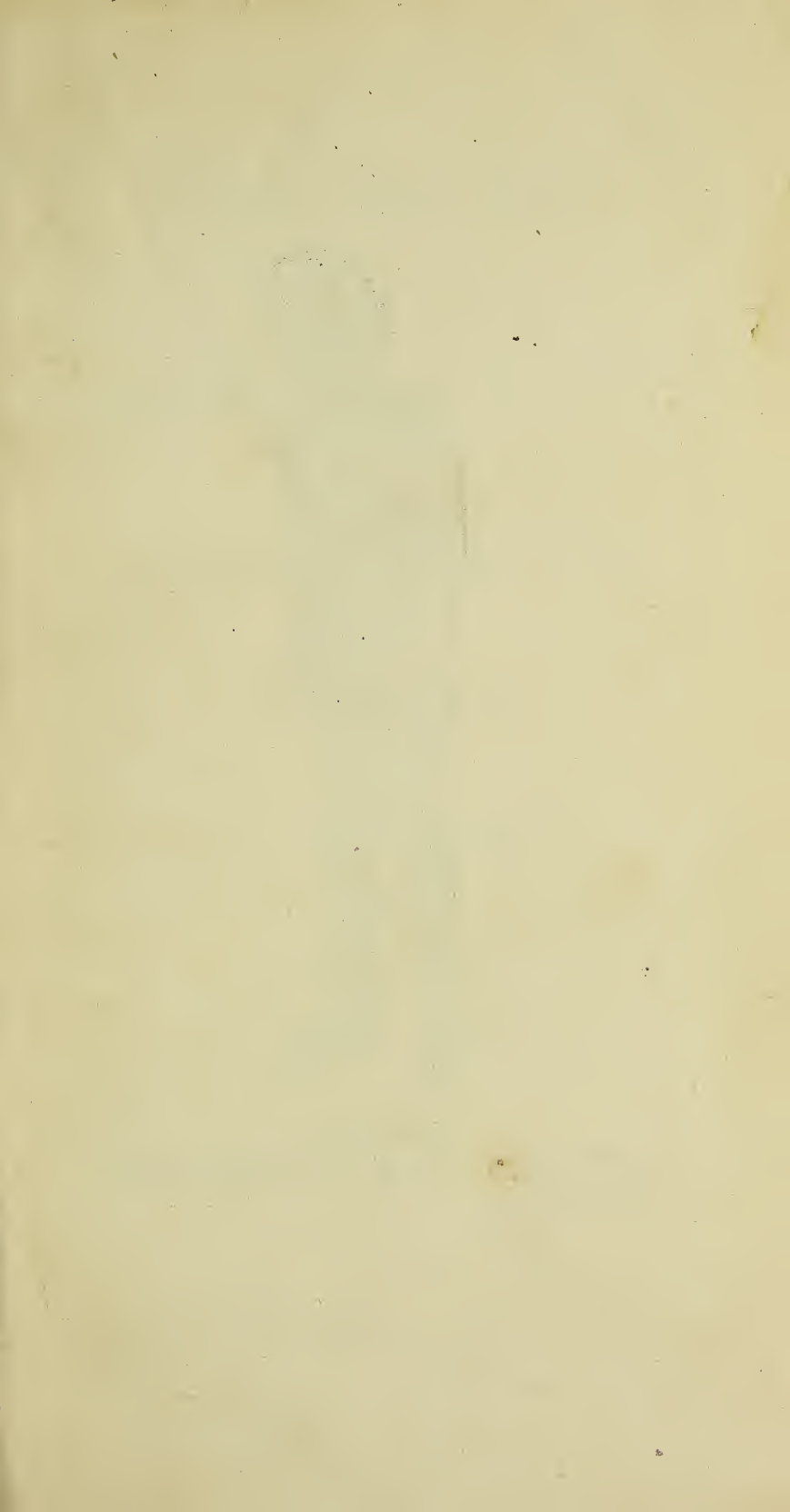
COLOMBO, CEYLON:

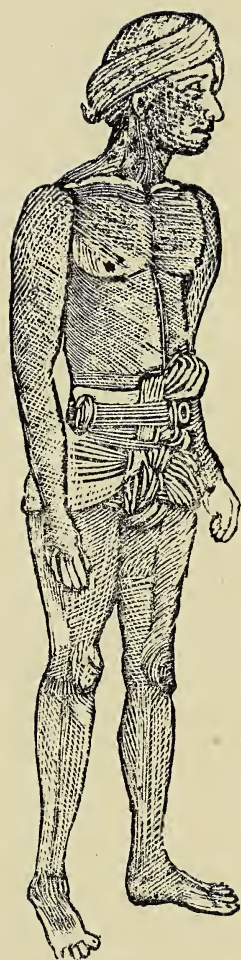
A. L. & J. FERGUSON.

1873.

William Brewster







“RAMASWAMI.”

[Engraved on wood by D. J. Wimalasurandara, Muhandiram, from a pencil drawing by a “Ceylon Planter.”]

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[*Reprinted from the “Ceylon Observer.”*]

COLOMBO, CEYLON:

A. M. & J. FERGUSON.

1878.



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PREFATORY NOTE.

It is perhaps as well to say that the following letters, which appeared from time to time during the last four years in the columns of the *Ceylon Observer*, were reprinted at intervals in book-form without the author having the opportunity of revision, or the printer the advantage of securing a systematic arrangement of his pages. This must be our apology for the shortcomings noticeable in a little volume, which, nevertheless, will, we trust, be received with favour in the circle of readers for whom it is intended.

THE PUBLISHERS.

COLOMBO, 27TH MARCH, 1878.

Thirty Years Ago.

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“THIRTY YEARS AGO.”

THIRTY YEARS AGO.

[Mr. P. D. Millie, the writer of the following interesting reminiscences, in an accompanying note to his first chapter says :—"I recollect an old proprietor engaging an assistant on £50 a year, and telling him he could not afford wine and beer on the pay, but that he would find they were unnecessary, as the 'watter' on the estate was 'vera gude.' The said proprietor, however, was not a very fit judge himself as to the good or bad qualities of undiluted water."]

CHAPTER I.

A COFFEE PLANTER'S WORK THIRTY YEARS AGO.

In the days of "thirty years ago," the luxuries, now usual and common necessities on every estate, of bread or toast and butter were unknown. So, at half-past 5 a.m., having partaken of a cup of coffee and a cabin biscuit, which must suffice to keep up the inward man till 11 o'clock, with a paper umbrella under one arm, and a long pole in the other hand, we ascend the hill. An old water-course, or rather a rain one, seemed the only track, straight up a steep grass hill. After numerous pauses to rest, we reach the top of the grass hill, on which was a small flat, and, pausing to admire the surrounding country, we are astonished at the great elevation reached in such a short space of time, for the ascent must have been at the gradient of one foot in two. "Come on," says my employer, "this is nothing to what you will see; no time is to be lost, the sun is coming over the rock." Passing the flat, again the ground rises as steep as ever, with the difference that the path-way is covered with loose stones of all sizes. One must walk behind the other, the path being so narrow that two cannot go on abreast. Of course, as I was last, following my guide, my whole attention was now occupied in escaping from the loose stones of all sizes that came tumbling down, loosened by the tread of my companion in advance, from which I mentally took note, when in company ascending this hill, always to go first. Higher still we find the ledge of rock lose itself in forest through which the path goes. I now see the

IN THE JUNGLE THIRTY YEARS AGO.

going over the rock does not mean climbing over it, but going through a break which had not been visible in the distance—a moral lesson: have an object, go straight at it with such caution and direction as common prudence demands, and you will find an opening.

We are now some 5,000 feet above sea level, and the view is magnificent. Adam's Peak, with a deep blue colour, towers above a thin white streak of mist, the bright colouring given by the sun on those valleys below, on which its rays had struck, contrasting with the dark shade of the Peacock and other mountains still in the grey of the morning.

By the way, we used* to be able to tell very well, according to the season of the year, what o'clock it was by the time the sun's rays first touched the extreme summit of the Peacock mountains. In fact, before very long I could always tell by a glance at the sun what o'clock it was, quite exact enough for all purposes in those rude days, with no railways or telegraphs and post letters to sent for to Pussellawa, seven or eight miles off, twice a week; indeed my watch was before long discarded altogether as a useless appendage and locked up in my box. A very good way of finding the time is, to examine the eyes of a cat. I became aware of this one day by chance. The natives are quick at telling the "time of day," by what means I do not know, unless by habit and a sort of natural instinct. Any way, it used to be a common practice in a matter of course way to ask your servant what o'clock it was, and one generally got a pretty correct answer. When the sun was going down he would measure his shadow, in fact make himself a sort of temporary sun-dial. One cloudy day, on putting the usual question, "What o'clock is it?" there was no reply, but immediately such a rushing and tumbling all over the house commenced, with shouts of "Catch the cat; master wants to know what's the clock." On demanding an explanation of this extraordinary proceeding, the cat was brought, and the true time of day at once declared. It was then brought to my notice that in the morning the pupil of the cat's eye was quite round, gradually decreasing, until at noon it was a small streak just like a hair, after which it again enlarged towards evening.

We have been resting during this digression, so a short pull more and we are over the rock into a new world—a small clearing of coffee, which was not visible owing to the immense number of stumps, roots, and logs

* Mr. Millie was a Ramboda and Pundaluoya planter.

What? not
known this
at 30
gran' obser-
vation?

approxi-
mate, Jan
mean.

A LONELY BUNGALOW.

blackened by fire. We make for the bungalow, in which was a room 10 feet square allotted for my residence. It had one door and window, just common planks nailed together, no glass; if the weather was windy, we could not shut the door or window, because there would be no wind and light. The furniture consisted of a bed, a couch, one chair, and a table; bedroom, parlour, dining-room, office, all in one, 10 feet square; there was no kitchen. A coolie boy was general servant, two earthen chatties all the kitchen utensils, and the kitchen itself, a corner in the open verandah. My storeroom was under the bed, but it was ample for all the storage, which was just a bag of rice, a few salt fish, and some condiments, or curry stuffs, a jar of salt, a bottle of tea, and a box of ship biscuits. Nothing around was to be seen but forest, not a blade of grass: far as the eye could see the horizon was bounded by this perpetual jungle.

A sense of utter loneliness came over me; it was worse than being at sea: the ship moves and we get out of the waste of water in time, but here is a fixture in the settled gloom of never-ending forest. Frequently, as evening approached, enveloped in thick mist, not a sound was to be heard but the sharp bark of the red elk, the scream of the night-hawk, varied by the crashing of elephants in the forest. The birds have no song during the day, insect sound is mute, and the silence can almost be felt. The moaning sound of the wind passing over the forests serves also to increase the feeling of gloom.

As evening set in, a dense mass of dry mist would settle down all round, so thick, that a friend used to say it put out his tobacco pipe. Three or four yards from the bungalow nothing could be seen: coolies arriving on necessary business suddenly appeared before you as if they had dropped from the clouds, whereas they had only come out of the mist. The planter's bungalow of the olden times was built of wattle and mud, thatched with grass, mud floor, and no ceiling, with glass windows or doors very rarely to be seen. Often during the still twilight in 1868, when reclining in my comfortable bungalow, the glow of a fire of wood slumbering on the hearth, snug comfortable mats and window curtains, undisturbed by the roar of water and dashing of the south-west monsoon rains, have I thought of the days of old, then the inhabitant of a mud hut. On such a night as this the elephants once amused themselves by tearing the thatch off my roof, and were only frightened off by throwing out of the hole which served for a window red-hot sticks from the fire-place.

An additional clearing having been formed further back into the jungle, the time once more arrives for another movement. Grass huts were erected for the coolies, and

JUNGLE-FOWL, ELK, AND PORCUPINE.

for myself a mud and wattle one of about 20 feet by 12. Half of this was partitioned off by a mat, so that one-half was servant's room and kitchen, the other for myself. The furniture was a couch, a table, and a chair; a small hole in the wall with a piece of coarse unplanned plank on leather hinges served for a window, a nail and string for a bolt; with a door of the same description. A hole was cut in the partition mat, through which the black boy popped out and in, as he was required. Having removed my bag of rice, biscuit. and coffee, I am alone in the forest, where the face of a white man is seldom seen, and that of a white woman never. Occasionally a change of diet was obtained by taking an evening shot, for jungle-fowl were plentiful. This is a cunning bird. Sometimes when you fancy you have crept within a few yards of his last crow and flap of wings, and are carefully looking out, gun at shoulder, for a shot, the flap and crow will be heard 200 yards off in the other direction, as if in derision. He had heard something and bolted off, and the stalking had all to be done over again, with probably the same result. The first elk I shot was done in an extraordinary manner by chance. In crawling through a jungle, with my gun loaded with ball, I thought a pair of bright eyes were staring at me through some nilu. Thinking it was a cheeta, on a momentary impulse I fired: there was a sudden rush, and all was quiet; marks of blood were seen on the ground, and, following up the track, I came on a large elk quite dead. A dozen men could not have carried him, so I had to go back for help, and it was only to shout to the coolies "*Mari, iraichchi, iraichchi,*" and there were plenty of volunteers.

By lion tiger
A tiger!
flesh, flesh

But the greatest delicacy for the planter's table, in the shape of game, is the porcupine. This animal is just a species of pig, and, as he feeds entirely on roots and vegetables, the flesh is clean and wholesome: a roasted porcupine in taste and flavour is something akin to a roasted sucking-pig, only perhaps more delicate and savoury, but, from being so cunning and difficult to catch, I suppose that roasted porcupine has not come under the experience of many. It has been said the porcupine throws out his quills as a weapon of offence: without passing any opinion on the subject the following occurrence happened to myself.

Sitting on a chair one evening in my verandah, a sharp click was clearly heard, as if something had struck the leg of the chair: on looking down, a porcupine quill was sticking in it. Now, how did that quill get there? Bushes and shrubs were within a few yards of where I was sitting, and could easily

RATS.

conceal a porcupine, or even a much larger animal. The quill was an eighth of an inch into the leg of the chair, and, if it had hit mine, with only thin linen trousers on, it would have gone in to the bone.

Our great domestic pest used to be rats: they undermined the floors, got up over the ceiling cloth-where the rattling over-head frequently disturbs the night's rest. I have actually been awakened of a night, by ra's in bed, nibbling my feet. On retiring to bed, my clothes, which lay on an adjoining chair, were frequently all nibbled and torn to pieces during the night, by rats tearing them up for their nests: in the morning a silk handkerchief would be found, all nibbled up into pieces, sticking out of a hole; one sock would be gone, and the other have half of the foot nibbled away. Then nothing would delight them more than tearing and scratching at paper. I am awakened in the middle of the night by a rustling, tearing sound. Oh horror! they are at my accounts: the accounts made up with so much trouble and difficulty, and which were to be posted to-morrow. Rustle, rustle. I start out of bed, strike a light, and find a bundle of accounts half drawn into a hole in the wall: they are rescued, but in such a state as to require to be copied over. Then I take to keeping papers in table drawers, but it is no use; the rats eat a hole in the back, tear up all the papers, and actually make a nest in the corner of the drawer. This was done in one case where there were some important papers, and the drawer was always locked. After a long period, on opening it, nothing was visible but a rat's nest: the young progeny gone, and a hole in the back of the drawer. This will never do: drawers are abandoned, and a good strong box put into use for papers and accounts. The rats are not to be beat: it is merely a question of time; they commence on the strong wooden box, gnawing and scraping at such a rate during the night, that sleep was impossible. The best way was to burn a light at night, as like all evil-doers they prefer the dark. Our lamps were very simply constructed. A tumbler, half full of water, was filled up with oil, as much as you think will burn all night; on the top of this oil was the floating wick, two small cross-sticks at right angles, supported at the ends by four pieces of cork, and at the centre of the cross-sticks the wick is tied. You thus have a floating wick in a tumbler. This used to burn all night in my bed-room, until the rats began to attack the lamp for the sake of the oil: they would actually run across the floor into their holes with the lighted wick. This was dangerous and not to be tolerated: we will circumvent the rats. They have a dislike

*Just a
little bit
exaggerated
I fear -*

WILD BEES.

to water, or rather to wet their feet. Placing the tumbler or lamp, already described, into a wash-hand basin, water was poured into the basin to within an inch of the top of the tumbler, so that the tumbler light appeared as an island surrounded by water. The rats congregated round the basin, peered over the rim, but none would cross the water, and the light was safe. However, one morning an adventurous one was found drowned in the basin; in taking observations he had slipped in, and could not get out. Wild bees are plentiful: from January to March they cast off their swarms; and one is aware of the approach of a swarm by the distant buzz. The swarms frequently make temporary settlements on branches of trees, not far from the ground, where they hang like a huge inverted sugar-loaf, waving to and fro with the motion of the branch. They are quite harmless if untouched: so much so, that one can with safety go close up to the swarm and inspect it. They are larger in size than the English bee. In the swarming season the only danger is in coming in contact with their clustering swarms. Thus—once when passing down the bed of a river during the dry season, the run of water being almost gone, and standing in deep pools in the bed of rock, with thick jungle on each side, this of course formed an easy cool pathway. While passing along, looking at my feet to avoid the water pools, I forgot my head, which suddenly bumped against an overhanging swarm of bees. Of course the bees were all in a buzz, and so was I, and there was nothing for it but to outrun them, which was eventually done, but I was very much stung, and my face was swollen for days afterwards. Another lesson in jungle life—take care of your head as well as your feet; or rather, while your feet are safe, take care they don't carry you into danger.

*Smaller
I should
have said,*

CHAPTER II.

MONEY, RESTHOUSES, TRANSPORT, AND OLD SOLDIERS.

The modern system of procuring money for payment of coolies, by means of chetties, was then unknown. We had not then the comfortable plan of sending a message to the money-dealer, that you required a certain amount on a specified day at a fixed hour, you having nothing to do but sit at the verandah table, see the cash counted out, and write out a cheque for the amount, including commission. Then, we had to make a periodical visit to Kandy for the cash. Notice was given the day before for coolies to hold themselves in readiness for the

*native money
Lankan*

MONEY IN DAYS OF OLD.

journey, for they were generally sent off in advance. These trips to Kandy were generally looked forward to with pleasure, as being some relief to the monotony of jungle life, as also a change from curry and rice to a more generous and suitable diet. Having packed up the rupees in bags, each containing £80 to £100, the hour of starting was fixed, the coolies, each with a bag of money on his head, were brought up in the rear by the planter on horseback, and behind him were the horsekeeper and coolie with the rice box containing a change of clothes. A pause was made for rest and refreshment at the Gampola resthouse, then kept by *old Young*. The journey was then resumed across the Gampola ferry, very frequently in the moonlight, for we had little or no fear of being attacked or robbed, but, to guard against this possible contingency, we had generally pistols at saddle-bow. I recollect one fine moonlight night starting from Gampola with four coolies loaded with rupees, in mat bags, on their heads. On reaching the descent of the Abbage Pass, towards the river, we went down the declivity, men and horse, at a good swinging trot. In rounding a sharp corner, one of the coolies stumbled and fell: crack, smash, tinkle, the mat bag had burst and the road was glittering with rupees in the bright moonlight. Of course we all pulled up. The thought passed through my mind: "What if it be a trick: are there any accomplices? What if some Sinhalese should pass round the corner and take upon themselves, and for themselves, the duty of collecting the rupees?" So, pulling the pistols from their holsters, "Be sharp about it," said I, "and gather them up, quick"—which was done, the money tied up in the coolie's cloth, and the journey resumed. On reaching home, the cash was locked up and the coolies dismissed. I went to bed, but not to sleep. Calculations of what might be lost entered my brain, and how many months' pay at £8 6s. 3d. it would require to make up the deficiency. To sleep was impossible, so, getting up, the money was counted and found perfectly correct, a pleasing trait of coolie honesty, for there was nothing to have hindered any of these men from concealing a few dozen of rupees, without being suspected; or, even if suspected, no action could have been taken against them. The going-to-Kandy-for-money system at last began to give way; the Gampola coach was started, we left our horses at Gampola, went in by the coach, brought out the money by it, and then resumed our journey on the old system. After this, the late Mr. J. R. Tate commenced to supply money at the resthouse. Proprietors or managers forwarded their cheques to him, or sent him information of how much they

ROBBERIES AND MURDERS.

wanted, and that they would be at Gampola on a certain day and hour to receive it, and for this trouble, or rather for his own profit on the transaction, he used to charge £2 per cent on Colombo cheques, or £1 10s. on Kandy ones. After this, the chetties took it up, and saved the trouble of going even to Gampola, by bringing up the cash direct to the estate, we not even handing them a cheque, until the money was all counted out on the table.

On looking back on these times, it seems curious that so few robberies, or even attempts at robbery, were made. Any one systematically carrying on this method in England or Scotland would soon be watched, marked, robbed, and murdered, yet the going-to-Kandy-for-money period was well known, often for days before. Preparations were made, coolies sent off in advance, and often the coolies advised, a number of days beforehand, of the very day and hour when they were to be paid. Not only so, but the coolies sent in advance into Kandy would openly proclaim at every bazar they passed, and to every passer-by with whom they were on speaking acquaintance, that they were going for money, and master was coming. So well aware did they seem of when master was going to Kandy and when pay-day was to be, that I used frequently to tell them that they knew more about it than I did. The only bad case of attempted robbery and murder which I can at present bring to my recollection was that of Mr. John Falconer, on the Udawella road, which must have been about the year '66 or '67, the particulars of which must still be in the memory of many. * Experience teaches. The smash of the money-bag on the Atabage Pass taught me never to carry money in mat bags, and so I had made to order a strong canvas one. Toss it and tumble it about, it would n't burst; it was made on a similar plan to a long purse, for equal quantities of rupees were put into each end, and tied tight up, so as not to jingle. This was thrown over the front of the saddle, where it balanced itself,

*Then they are improving
the wrong way, for robberies
are frequent now.*

* It is curious that Mr. Millie should forget the case of poor Morgan of Deltota, who was undoubtedly murdered for the sake of the money he carried, but which the murderers failed to secure. After being shot twice, the poor fellow was able to ride on, carrying the money with him, until he reached friends who watched over his last hour and received his dying message to his mother. The motive for Falconer's murder was understood to be not robbery but revenge; he had been at court for a warrant, not for money.—Ed.

CARRYING RICE TO DIMBULA.

and we could get along at a good trot, or even canter. About this time some of the earlier Dimbula estates began to be opened out, the road to which, or rather path, was from Pussellawa, through Rothschild estate, or below Monaragala, rounding the patana hill, and descending to the Kotmale-ganga through a native village. Crossing the river by means of a native ferry-boat, it ascended on the other side below Tispana, and upwards and onwards along the grass lands, then passing under the Bogawatta estate, it descended to Fairholm's ford, where I believe a good bridge is now erected. This path was eventually cut into a bridle trace, and I believe still exists.

The Dimbula pioneers had great difficulty in procuring coolies, and, when they did, the bulk of the coolies' time was occupied in carrying rice to the estate from Pussellawa along this path. Many estates were for months without coolies; I knew one proprietor, long since dead, who used to walk down to Pussellawa, along this path, one day, and return the next, carrying on his shoulders a load of rice for his own consumption, and some condiments or curry stuffs in his pocket; pumpkins or brinjals could be procured from some of the village gardens, and this was the usual fare. It used to be rather a ticklish job, crossing at the Dimbula ford. Having first taken off your horse his saddle and bridle, they were taken over with you in the small canoe. Then a rope was fastened round the horse's neck, and the end of it taken across by the boatman. The horse was then pulled into the river, or, if he would not go, as was frequently the case, the horsekeeper was left behind to whip him in, then a plunge, a good many snorts and struggles, and the animal was landed, dripping wet, on the other side, shaking and trembling with fear and cold. A good wisp down with a handful of grass, however, and then saddled and bridled and off at a canter soon put him all to rights. Then a bridle path was opened from Upper Dimbula to Nuwara Eliya, and some of the earlier Dimbula planters had horses there, and made that their head-quarters. The bridle path came out near the Nuwara Eliya toll, on the road to Ramboda, where old Sergeant Daly lived, and had a small potato garden. The sergeant had served in some of the old Peninsular wars. How he came to Ceylon I never knew, nor how he came to settle down in this desolate spot. But the passers-by would always see the old sergeant in his shirt sleeves, digging and working in his potato garden, and his wife sitting in front of the cottage. She was quite blind, and the sergeant had all the house work and cooking to do himself, no great hardship, he used to say, to an

AN OLD SOLDIER.

old soldier, so long as there was forage in or about the camp. He was a general favourite, a real Irishman, jolly under all and every adverse circumstance of life, and many a traveller, before ascending the Pass, would remember Sergeant Daly, and put a few sticks of good tobacco in his pocket for him, or fill his spirit flask at the Ramboda resthouse, to give the sergeant a taste of the "real Irish stuff." But what the old man enjoyed more than anything else was a few old newspapers; it did not matter how old they were: they were new to him. How eagerly he read all the military news, and how he would comment on the doings of the French, his old enemies! I believe he was at Waterloo. After he had cursorily satisfied his own curiosity, as to the news of the day, he would go inside and read the paper aloud to his wife, and then the couple would fight their battles over again, and talk about the "days of old." "Things were better managed then; the old Duke would not have made this error." It is always so. Peace to his memory, the old sergeant has long since passed away—is laid "to moulder in the forest glade."

Going down the Pass towards Ramboda, the only estates then open were "Old Palagala," General (then Colonel) Fraser's, and a small clearing above the bridge. I do not know who was the proprietor, but a periodical visitor used to examine the estate, named Mr. Lock.* It was about 1846-7 that Wavendon was first opened by Captain Fisher, who, like most of the original planters, never reaped any of the fruits from all his labours.†

The old Ramboda resthouse was on the same

Mr. Lock was the agent of Baron Delmar, and, as such, purchased the Horagalla estate from Master Attendant Steuart, who was acting for the Stewart Mackenzie family. The sale was repudiated, and an English barrister, Mr. Thomas Young MacChristie, was sent out specially to conduct the litigation, which ended in the restoration of the estate. Large loans on block to Mr. Lock were understood to be the cause of the downfall of the Bank of Ceylon. Mr. MacChristie was subsequently retained by Dr. Elliott and his friends, and did good service in "the verandah case," and the parliamentary enquiry into Ceylon affairs, which ended in the recal of Lord Torrington, and the removal from the Island of Sir J. E. Tennent and Mr. (now Sir) P. Wodehouse.

—Ed.

† Fisher, like Pallisser, was a great hunter in this land.—Ed.

THE OLD RAMBODA RESTHOUSE.

site where it stands now. It was kept by a man named Cooper and his wife. He had some employment on a neighbouring estate, and his wife looked after the resthouse. I recollect that we used sometimes to walk to this resthouse on a Sunday to have a treat for tiffin, which was bread and cheese and a bottle of beer. We sometimes tried hard for leave to take away even half a loaf, but it would not do, bread was too precious. So we had to go home to our *rotis* or hard biscuit. Now, only fancy any of the present generation of planters walking five miles to the Ramboda resthouse, in order to have a treat in the way of food or refreshments! So far as my later experience served, they would rather walk that distance to keep clear of it, and enjoy the more genial hospitalities of some neighbouring bungalow. Mrs. Stainton also, about this time, for a short period, kept the resthouse, but afterwards removed to Kandy, where the hotel was long noted for supplying the best and best-cooked food in the town. There was then a very dangerous bridge over the Girinda Ela, a little on the Pussellawa side of Ramboda: above was a high waterfall over a steep ledge of rock, below the same; the crossing for the road seemed to be either a natural or artificial step in the rock. On the step, heavy blocks of stones were set, on the top of which slab rocks were laid, without any railings or parapet. The width was just about sufficient to allow a cart to pass, so that above and below the bridge were perpendicular waterfalls. I recollect crossing this bridge in the dark one night, without knowing it. Being aware that it might be close at hand from the noise of the water, the stick, or rather perhaps the invariable paper umbrella, was carefully used as a feeler, when it struck me that the sound of the fall seemed lessening, and behind me, and so it was. I might have been walking across on the very edge of the slab rock, or my foot might have been partially over it. I might—well it is no use thinking what might have been. Why don't they put railings on the edge of the bridge. If the Governor or the Bishop tumbles over, it will then be done, but I do not think there was a Bishop then. That was, at least, one respect in which "the olden days were better than these." What is the fate of the Ramboda church and graveyard? The former used to be in a very dilapidated state, and, if extensive and expensive repairs have not been gone into, it must have tumbled down. The graveyard used to be very neglected, thorns and jungle encroaching all around.

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(9)

PLANTING IN UPPER RAMBODA.

This used to be a neat-looking church, and the site a very pretty one, and many a good sermon has the late Mr. Schrader preached in it. He used to preach there in the afternoon, after the forenoon sermon at Pussellawa. Although the congregation seldom exceeded four or six, sometimes only two or three, yet he was always punctual at the hour, or, if late, he might have been seen by us sitting waiting in the shade of the trees, coming round the Tavalantenna turns of the road at a sharp canter, and, on arrival, enter the pulpit, ready warmed for the service.

Is there any virtue in black cloth, that clergymen in the tropics should deem it essentially necessary to wear it? Why cannot a sermon be as well preached (better I should think) in a white jacket, as in a black coat? It would make the hearers feel more pleasant and cool, and external feelings somehow or other possess a strange and mighty influence over internal ones.

The clergyman's pony, I should add, in course of time was superseded by a *bandy*, or covered carriage. This was as it ought to be, and both preacher and congregation felt more comfortable.

A long stretch of bare perpendicular rock, from 200 to 300 feet in height, extends from behind the Ramboda resthouse, on towards Pussellawa, until it loses itself in the Helboda jungle. Over the top of this rock were opened several estates, Meemalle, The Eyrie, Meeriscotuakelle, and Poojagodde. They all turned out failures, say about 1,200 acres of planted coffee. What has become of them all now? "Lapsed into jungle," likely enough; it was a fine "lay of land" but the soil was poor. It generally consisted of a sort of rotten or gravelly rock of no substance, or, if not this, a stiff, clayey sort of stuff, which left the mark of the mamotie on it, in cutting roads or holes, somewhat similar to the mark of a knife on stiff cheese. It was very cold in climate, and the general elevation would average fully, or over, 4,000 feet. In those days the hopes of the proprietor were high, but gradually they came to see they were futile.* One thing could be said: it was a fine, cold, healthy climate, and both Europeans and coolies thrived amazingly, not in pocket, but in robust bodily health. The elevation was much too high, for the lay of land with vast extent of forest surrounding it on every side, and it was fearfully windy during the north-east monsoon, the wind blowing from the Maturata quarter, through the gulleys on the False Pedro

* A good deal of this land has been, or is in the course of being, resuscitated.—ED.

UPPER RAMBODA.

range, until not a leaf was left on the coffee trees. Still in other parts of the country, they grew coffee and made it pay, got very fair crops, at a higher elevation than this, for instance in Maturata, Badulla, and Haputale, also Dambagastalawa, in Kotmale, but at a high elevation it makes a great difference, as to whether it is an open patana country or a forest one. One thing seems certain in present times: you can plant coffee and get fair crops at a higher elevation than you could in those days. How is this? Is it because the climate is changed, rendered milder by the clearing away of so much forest? It used to be a theory, that the extension of coffee plantations would affect, in materially decreasing, the rainfall. But, taking a series of years, this is not the case, for we find that, if in one or two given seasons the rainfall slackens, and the number of inches are less than an average, it is made up for, during some of the following seasons, in having more than an average, or a great excess, of rain. I do not think it is so much the rain that prejudicially affects coffee at a high elevation, as the constant fog or mist. The plant has no respite from constant moisture; when the rain ceases, the damp fog still continues.* Although we were ignorant of it in old times, the line of mist that used to hang on the Ramboda ranges towards evening, especially during the lull between monsoons, pretty correctly points out the height at which the profitable cultivation of coffee ceases. From the top of Eton and Choisy, resting on the top of Rangbodde, it rounded about the middle of Pallegalla, leaving Kondegala entirely unseen in the fogs; it then passed along through about the centre of Weddemulle, until it met the Ramboda rock, above Wavendon, passing on at the base of the rock, taking in the upper portion of Karagastalawa, and so round the forest above Helboda. Any one, especially a new arrival, living above this line of mist often for days, would get a pleasant surprise, on descending, to find himself suddenly out of the mist, into a clear atmosphere, possibly sunshine. Now it is quite probable that this line of mist was the boundary between two climates, or rather "strata" of air. In geology, on digging into the earth, we

* There is almost chronic mist at about 4,500 ft. in the Knuckles, and there the coffee tree produces leaves and blossoms, but scarcely any fruit. In Dimbula, mist cannot be said to be long at any elevation, the ranges, except in absolutely rainy weather, being beautifully clear. In Haputale, there is, of course, the warmer and drier climate and shelter from the south-west monsoon.—Ed.

UPPER RAMBODA.

come upon distinctly separate and well-defined boundaries of soil, and it may be that something of the same sort may, I do not say does, exist in the air. The leaf of the coffee trees above this line was small, very often tinted with brown on the edges, had a variegated appearance, shrunken, and turned up at the ends, a perfectly different appearance from the fine smooth dark green leaf, at a lower elevation. The clusters of fruit were also small, indeed cluster is not a name for them; distributed over the tree were berries in twos, threes, and fours, and very frequently only a solitary one, so that, after one or two rounds of picking, the crop was generally about done. In calculating crop on the trees, all planters are now well aware of the importance of distinguishing between large and small clusters, but this was not taken into due consideration then; hence the holders of high-land coffee properties were always invariably disappointed in their estimates.

The only redeeming point was, that this high coffee brought a high price, but I do not think it does so now. Be this as it may, I believe the generally recognized opinion now is that fine quality does not reimburse the planter in pocket for deficiency in quantity.

CHAPTER III.

HOW THE COAST ADVANCE SYSTEM BEGAN; RICE DELIVERY AND GIFTS OF CUMBLIES.

One might meet a solitary planter, or perhaps two or three in company, wending their way down the Atabage Pass, clothed in leech gaiters, and a hunting cap with a white cover hanging down the back of the neck, going to Kandy for coolies. "Hallo, Jones, where are you off to now? Is it for money or coolies?" for it must be either the one or the other.

We never knew where we might find coolies: it might be within a few miles of the estate, or within a few hundred.

As an instance: once on making preparations for one of these trips, to be weeks, or perhaps months, away, on rounding one of the corners of the road, near Glenloch estate, some gangs of 50 to 60 coolies each suddenly met me. On asking where they were going to, the kanganies called a halt, and after a good deal of "palaver" they agreed to engage with me, and so that very same evening found me back on the estate with a full force of labour. It was always a good sign for the planter, when, on speaking to these travelling gangs, they stopped, as in general their minds were made up as to where they were going, in which case they marched

PROCURING COOLIES.

past, shouting out, as they did so, the name of the estate to which they were proceeding. In this event it was a hop-less case trying to get a word with them. Another likely place for finding coolies was in some of the waste patches of ground about Gampola, where, in the evenings, you might see, at some distance off, the curling smoke proceeding from their cooking fires. Failing this we went on to Kandy, where most of the immigrants generally remained for a day or two, to rest, and, as at Gampola, might be found encamped about the out streets of the town, or on the flat grass-land between the end of the lake and Bogambra Mills, where a set of rude mud and wattle "lines," with thatched roof, was erected by Government for their accommodation. But, failing Kandy, we then proceeded down the Matale road towards Dambulla, or on the road to and beyond Kurunegala. I think the present system of coolies shipping to Colombo in the native boats was then unknown: at least I have no recollection of anything of the sort in those days.

Afterwards, as the demand for coolies increased, superintendents would take passage at Colombo direct for the coast, making engagements with them in their villages, and bring them over with them, leaving a supply of money for the benefit of the relations of those who left them behind, and placed to the debit of Ramaswami's account, to be subsequently worked out by him, as wages in advance, on the estate. The kanganies and coolies now began to open their eyes; they must be people of very great importance and consequence that the "duraish" took all this trouble, and were at all this expense in coming so far to visit them. Kanganies on the estates began to tell the masters it was no use their taking all this trouble. They (the kanganies) would manage it all nicely. They would take the money, go over to the coast, and be sure to bring back lots of coolies. The sums asked were so very small, and the kangani generally leaving a gang, as security for his return, this method was adopted, for a long time with most wonderful success. And so, this the thin edge of the wedge, "coast advances," was fairly in! Small sums of from £3, £5, to £10 were the usual amounts advanced; £15 or £20 was thought an unusually large sum, and scarcely safe; however, none was lost, the kanganies in general punctually turned up, the rate of labour procured for the advance being probably about, often considerably under, 8s. or 10s. a head. Indeed it used to be remarked that the less money that was given to a kangani, the more coolies, in proportion to those who were more heavily advanced, he brought.

heads.
coolies

WANT OF ACCOUNTS.

There were no regular accounts of estate coolie advances, as the kanganies punctually paid up, the first or second pay-day. They used sometimes to apologize for not paying up on the first pay-day, stating, most reasonably and correctly, that the people required money for current supplies, but that it would all be settled next pay-day, which was done. Fancy a kangani in these times apologizing for not paying up his debt on first pay-day after he was advanced! Another plan was, on sending a kangani to the coast with advances, he would make arrangements with a gang left behind on the estate, to pay up his advance, so that it was sometimes paid before the actual debtor arrived back again with coolies from the coast.

Rice was issued by the estates in the outlying localities at 6s. per bushel, and on the nearer ones about Gampola at 5s. At these rates a considerable profit was placed to the credit of the estate, unless, as in some instances, the manager had the supply of rice in his own hands, as a perquisite. One manager on a large estate in Kadugannawa, from this source, in addition to his pay, used to clear a profit of several hundreds per annum.

It was often difficult to get the coolies to accept a proper allowance of rice. They used frequently to draw only half or three-quarters of a bushel per month, in fact they starved themselves, and we used to compel them to take a full supply, letting them know, with decision, that if they did not draw a supply necessary for the monthly consumption, that they would be charged with it, whether or no. A good man, after full work, on deducting his rice, would probably have a balance of 11s. or 12s. to receive. In addition to rice, we used to issue one measure of salt per month at 4d. four or six coconuts at 1½d., and several salt fish at various prices, according to size and quality. So that the making up of the balance due on the check-rolls involved a somewhat greater amount of calculation than in the present times. But if the making out of the balance of the check-roll involved greater calculation, when the check-roll was made out so were the accounts, as it was all the account we were in the habit of rendering. The present exact and precise method of monthly accounts was little, if at all, in use. We merely forwarded balance due on check-roll, superintendence, carpenters' and masons' wages, &c. No reference was made to the distribution of labour, and its cost, so that proprietors or managers never exactly knew what their weeding, pruning, manuring, gathering, or crop expenses were. Now only fancy a manager doing on this way, in our present times! He would

DEAR RICE.

not go on long; he would certainly soon get the "sack," and not only this, but be held responsible, and probably made to pay up the money for which he could not account. In the later times, the writer has had some painful personal experiences of this—accounts would not balance as they ought, and it was always on the wrong side. When they were wrong, there was always a deficiency. Of course it was paid out, but how was it done? Who got it? There's the rub. It is no use thinking over it: the accounts must go in, so the superintendent charges himself with the deficiency. It is wonderful how a few cases of this sort of thing sharpen one up—a good remedy for which is, to make a rule never to pay away a single coin, without marking it down at once. Don't say, or think, "Oh, I'll mark it down at night," but do it at once, before shutting up the money-box, and for this purpose have a sort of scroll cash-book lying along with the money in your box; when any of the latter is required, take them both out together. As you pay out, mark down, and then in the evening, or at any subsequent period, enter from the scroll book into the regular cash one. By this system, it is impossible to lose money, if you make an inviolable rule, however great the urgency or hurry, never to shut your cash-book without noting down the money you have paid out. The price of rice issued, as years rolled on, gradually crept up to 7/ and 8/, the wonderful feature in the case being that, the higher the prices were, the more persistent were the coolies in demanding a full supply: they could not do with half or three-quarter bushels now. They would take two bushels if you give it them. If the rice issue day was Saturday, and there happened to be five Saturdays in a month, we used to have great disputes, in trying to explain that they were not entitled to receive five quarters of a bushel in a month, and the matter was generally arranged by letting them have an advance of rice to next month's account. The reasons for the increased consumption or demand for rice now on the part of the coolie are not far to seek. The men work better, eat better, and require more food. If they do not, rice is just as good as cash; they can always dispose of it, or exchange it for other commodities. A curious system used to be in use, called the keeping of rice; at every rice issue one or two measures were set aside out of each man's supply. So that, say, a gang of twenty by this means would realize a spare bushel, it was sold, and the cash proceeds handed over to No. 1 in the gang. This process was adopted every week, on every rice issue day, until twenty weeks elapsed, and the whole gang had been gone over, when it was again recom-

COOLIES' ACCOUNTS.

menced, and, so exact and obstinate were they in paying into this rice fund, that during a scarcity they would rather starve themselves than fail or neglect to do so. However, in times of very "short commons," weeks and months would sometimes pass of general scarcity of rice, but, when a full supply did arrive, the coolies would present themselves and ask for the rice that was due to them in the past month, or even the month before that. It seemed useless to try and explain to them that this arrear of eating was not necessary, that their wages had been paid, and they had not been charged for it. It seemed impossible to overrule their argument—were they not promised a bushel of rice a month and they had not received it. "Well, but you have received, or will receive, its value in additional money payments." The cooly would walk away silent and thoughtful; in deep consideration, evidently considering himself a very ill-used individual. Now, I think, the coolies of the present time are somewhat more reasonable and intelligent than they were in those times. They can, and do, comprehend the ordinary transaction between themselves and the master much better: they are not as "thick in the head." They know very well when their pay is correct or if there is an error; the modern pay-day is a very different one from what it was then. Now coolies will take their balance and walk off quietly without a word; if they think there is any mistake or error, they will come up quietly next day, and have an explanation. A very different affair from the dreadful ordeal we had to pass through in olden times. Probably the first man you paid would immediately declare it was very short. You would ask him how many days he was absent. "Correct." Rice received? "Correct." "Well, you have worked 24 days at 8d.: that is 16s. You have had a bushel of rice at 8s.: and the balance is 8s."; all which he acknowledged to be correct, but still his pay was short. Now, what was to be done with a fellow like this? What could be done but to give him a cuff and a kick, and order him off? The best plan is to take no complaints at the pay table, but give notice, that if there are any they will be attended to next day. You will then have few or none, for the coolies have cooled down and had time to calculate. I have known them have a string and tie a knot on it for every day they worked, as a check on the master. Others would tie up a small stone in the end of their cloth after the day's work was done, so that on, pay-day, if there was any question of short pay, he would, to prove his own argument, unknot a piece of cloth and count out the stones, in proof of the number of days he had worked. My first experience of this plan was somewhat ludicrous.

PAY-DAY.

On paying a man his balance, he asked the number of days he had worked. On being told, "Twenty-three," he said it was wrong, that he had worked twenty-four, and at once proceeded to count out the stones. On coming to the last stone, the number was twenty-three. Without being at all put out he merely walked off, saying he must have lost one.

Of course this sort of thing was not, as a rule, permitted at the pay table, otherwise there would have been no end to it, and the work would never have been got through. It required a great deal of patience, and the best way was, and I should fancy still is—get through with the work as fast as possible, shut up the books, and take off the money bag. So long as its lies on the table, the coolies will hanker and hang about. A very good plan is to pay them at the store. It saves the grounds about the bungalow from being trodden down, and then when paying is over you can march off with the balance of the cash, so taking yourself, and it, out of sight. But this sort of thing is unnecessary in the present day, where accounts are correct, and good discipline is the rule. We were not very particular about paying correctly the odd pence: if there was 6s. 7d. due, we would pay 6s. 6d.; another who had 6s. 10d. due would receive 7s. This was not much out of the way, and it would have been well for the coolies had every one been as reasonable as this. The cumbly was a perquisite, and was not generally charged, but they were cheap then, costing from 1s. to 1s. 3d. The arrangement was that the coolies had the use of these cumbly during their stay on the estate, and on leaving it they gave them up, as well they might; for such a parcel of rags and rubbish, as they did hand over; useless and fit for nothing. The cooly, like many of his betters, does not appreciate an article he gets for nothing. He did not take even ordinary care of his cumbly. It, after a few weeks, was all in rags, and he was in want of a new one. "Arisi illai, kambili illai," was constantly sounding in your ear—and these two brief expressions, of two wants each, were put forth as a legitimate and proper excuse for all manner of deficiency in work or even for no work at all. In present times the cooly buys and pays for his own cumbly, and see the care he takes of it and the time it lasts him as compared with the "days of old" when he got it for nothing. We used to keep stocks of cumbly in store for immediate issue to new arrivals.

The cooly, knowing there was a good stock of cumbly in store, would, when his own began to get a little the worse for wear, stow it away below some coffee tree, and make his appearance at the bungalow,

a cumbly
cloths
used as
a blanket
blanket

no price
no cumbly

NEW AND OLD CUMBLIES.

shivering, or pretending to shiver, with cold, stating that his cumby had been stolen. He had placed it on a rock during working hours, in order to have more freedom of action to do "hard work for master," and it was gone. If the "master" was so compassionate as to hand him over a new cumby, the cooly would accept of it as a just right, or more probably grumble and say it was too small. But if master "smelt a rat," or more probably ordered him off as an idle careless fellow, ten to one but he would appear in his old cumby next day, which he had discovered as having been purloined by some of his friends, but it would last him a good long while after this, until, by its tattered appearance, the master saw he was actually in need of a new one, in which case the want was promptly supplied. These stocks of cumblies in store did not pay; the rats got amongst them and cut them all in holes, so that either the coolies would not take them, or they had to be issued at a loss. Consequently the system got out of use. The kanganies were supplied with money to purchase them for their gangs, which were always to be got at the Gampola or Kandy bazars. The people then pleased themselves as to the size and quality of the cumby; at least, if they did not, they could not blame master. Subsequently the trade was taken up by the up-country chetties, and now all grumbling on the matter of cumblies is a thing of the past; the kangani manages it all, or an advance to purchase them is treated as it actually is, as part of the advance account.

These were grand times for cart contractors and cartmen, when the latter received up loads of rice from the Colombo agents of estates, bound to deliver them at the estate, within fifteen days from the date of the cart note, two shillings to be stopped off their balance hire of every day past due. What cared they for the balance hire, or the fine of two shillings! They had probably received about three-quarters of the whole hire, in advance. They proceeded to Kandy, sold the rice, and returned to Colombo to load for more, having made a good profit on the transaction, while the coolies on the estate were starving. Or, having got fairly well up the Kandy road, they would halt at some wayside cattle-shed, unload, and store up the rice, return to Colombo, engage with another agency firm for an up-country trip for the sake of the ready money advance hire. This might probably be done several times, and, when it suited the convenience of the cartmen, all the consignments would be delivered, weeks or months after they were due. There was always some plausible story about sick bullocks, or if a considerable quantity

CART CONTRACTORS.

of rice was deficient their cattle had died, and the time they had gone to purchase others the rice had been stolen; but it would be endless to repeat all that they did say. They would even sell the rice, and substitute another sort of an inferior and cheaper quality, so that it became necessary for the Colombo agencies to forward by post sealed samples of the rice despatched, or more frequently the sealed sample was in the hands of the carmen. This was the better plan as they knew what to expect but it did not always answer. They would swear the sample was better than what was loaded in the carts, that it did not correspond, and what could they do? They were honest men. The curious looking bandy with its pair of insignificant looking bullocks has however done good service to the planting interest. How could we have got on without them? The success of coffee in many a remote district would have been very doubtful without the aid of the bullock bandy.

I have heard it said by some old planting authorities, that a cart-road to an estate, or within reasonable distance of a district, would eventually pay, *at any cost*, and, if we go into all the details of labour which are saved by a cart-road, it is very probably true. The carriage of rice and coffee up and down steep mountain paths is no fit work for a cooly; it involves an immense loss of time and labour to the proprietor. He must have his coffee despatched, for coffee is money; he must have rice, for rice is food; and just at the very time when labour is most in request for crop, or pruning after crop, the bulk of his labour is constantly called off for the despatch of crop, and transport of rice. The cooly excessively dislikes being employed in this transport, and as a rule dislikes and avoids those plantations which, from their position, are obliged to adopt it. And thus it unfortunately happens that those estates which are some distance from a cart-road, and therefore require a larger amount of cooly labour, are generally least able to acquire it. From short labour supply and heavy cooly transport the work gets behind, the pruning is not done, it seriously affects the next crop, take their results for a series of years, results which materially affect the value of an estate and its crops, and he, or they, would be deficient in sound calculation, who could put them in the scale to weigh against any reasonable cost, in constructing a cart-road into a district. But where from various causes a cart-road cannot be determined on there are few estates so situated as to be unable to work tavalam cattle, rather a slow method of transport, but it saves the coolies, although it destroys

Cattle
which
carry
loads on their backs -

ROADS AT ANY COST.

the roads. But one of its greater objections is, that they cannot be worked during the rains, as the loads of rice and coffee would get wet, and spoilt. Hence pack cattle are more suitable for the comparatively dry climates of Uva and Haputale than any of the more rainy districts.

It is wonderful so few accidents occurred to coolies in carrying heavy loads of coffee and rice down and up steep mountain paths. One however I shall never forget: a string of coolies were carrying coffee down the steep face of Karagastalawa estate; one of them dropped, as if he had been shot. He was dead: the bag of coffee containing two and a half bushels, had somehow suddenly shifted, giving his neck a sharp turn or twist, and completely broken it. I suspect, if the bags were not well stitched up, they frequently took out coffee and hid it, in order to lessen their burden; at least I have seen coffee lying about on the coolly transport paths, concealed in jungle, or under coffee trees. No wonder then the cartmen were short in delivery, or that they grumbled sadly at having their balance hire stopt.

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT MADE COFFEE PLANTING EXPENSIVE IN THE OLDEN DAYS.

I forgot, at the commencement of last chapter, it might be neither money nor coolies that Jones was off for. It might have been in search of rice, or of the missing rice carts, now some three weeks or a month past due. If it was, you would see, not very far behind him, a string of coolies coming along with hungry-looking visages and indented stomachs, but there could be no mistake about it when you saw a bushel or half-bushel measure lugged along on the shoulders of one of them. They would also have each a bag hung over their shoulders if the day was warm and fine, or over their head and neck, cumbly form, if it rained. Batch after batch of carts are passed on the road, with the question: "What estate are you going to?" or "Let me see your way-bill"; if the reply or sight of the way-bill was unsatisfactory, you would then commence to question the cartman in such Sinhalese as you could muster, if he had seen or passed your rice carts anywhere. If the reply was in the negative, you would proceed on the journey more disheartened than ever, but if in the affirmative, if they were only a few miles behind, how we all used to stir up! The

RICE CARTS 15 MILES OFF.

wretched old pony was spurred to a canter, nothing loath; perhaps he smelt the rice, or had some vague presentiment, from former experiences, that, when rice carts were emptied of their contents, his journey was over, and it was homeward-bound. At last the carts are reached, are stopped, and one is ordered to unload and measure out, at the road-side. The cartmen, of course, are only too glad to get rid of a load before reaching the point of delivery, and the request is promptly attended to.

A supply of rice, sufficient to relieve the urgent temporary wants of the estate, is measured out, and a number of the coolies, with light loads of half or even a quarter of a bushel each, sent on in advance to relieve the hungry ones left behind.

The remainder of the men seize hold of the cart wheels, and turn them round with a will; in fact, the cart now drives the bullocks, not the bullocks the cart. Singing as they go, deep ruts, mud holes into which the wheels sink to the axle, are as nothing against the united forces at the wheels. As the road gets good, they cease this labour; but still act as a sort of convoy or escort to the cartmen. They are not going to let them out of their sight. They might stop, and the rice would not arrive for some days.

The master is quite safe in spurring on his pony, and leaving carts and coolies behind, to come on at their leisure. No fear of the carts going astray now. And the next day the coolies would arrive on the estate and report carts and rice all safely brought up to their destination.

When the roads were so very bad, impassable during the government of Sir George William Anderson, we seldom expected carts up to the estates, and used regularly to send coolies down to empty them, until at last the Colombo agencies could not get carts to engage to deliver beyond Pussellawa. I recollect once getting a good "wiggling" from the late firm of J. and G. S. & Co. It happened so: a batch of rice carts were at the bottom of the Atabage Pass. The cartmen came on and said they could come no further, the road was so bad; I, not being short of rice, told them they must come on and fulfil their agreement.

Well, back the cartmen go to Colombo and inform J. and G. S. & Co. that they could not proceed farther than Atabage, and that I had refused to unload them there; up comes a letter by post, a very strong one. My conduct was very bad: "I ought to have been only too happy to have had the rice for the unloading, even although fifteen miles

BAD ROADS AND SHORT SUPPLIES.

off. If the cartmen sold the rice or failed to deliver it, they would take no action against the contractor, but hold *me* responsible." Well, this was decided enough, so the carts were unloaded at Atabage, and the cartmen paid their full fare. So bad were the roads at that time, that it was once reported of a Pussellawa planter that his hat was seen lying on the top of a mud hole, but that the reporter of this circumstance was too much occupied with attending to his own personal safety, to have time to examine whether the planter had sunk down into the hole, and left his hat floating on the top of the mud, or if his hat had merely blown off, and he found it unsafe to attempt to pick it up again.*

At last, horsemen, and even foot passengers abandoned the road altogether, and made tracks on the adjoining patana grounds.

The road was impassable even for a light carriage, and those who attempted it had to lead their carriage and come out and walk. I never knew how things were allowed to get into this state. Whether from want of money, or labour, or want of orders, something wrong with the "red tape."† Certainly, they had to pay "the piper" in getting the road put into proper repair, for, it is with roads as with many other things—"A stitch in time saves nine." It frequently happened, that one planter was quite out of rice; his neighbour, whose carts had just arrived, had plenty. Then the order of the day was, a note was sent to the latter, requesting, as a temporary loan, a certain amount of rice, sure to be returned by "this day week," for our carts are "due in three days." The request being generally acceded to, coolies are sent to the store of the obliging neighbour, some miles off. This involves, at least, one day, or half-a-day's work; immediate starvation is staved off; but in a few days the borrowed rice is done, our carts have not arrived, and we are again in want. Much to our consternation a note arrives from the friendly neighbour, reminding us of the "promise to pay," stating that his

* Our correspondent ought not to have forgotten the story of men with long poles being sent in advance of carts and carriages to sound the holes, anything more than three feet deep being deemed dangerous!—Ed.

† It was quite understood that Sir George Anderson had received instructions to put the finances of the Colony in a safe condition. He acted strictly on his orders, and the result was his own unpopularity and the popularity of Sir H. Ward, who found a large balance available, of which he made a good use by spending liberally on roads and bridges.—Ed.

BORROWING RICE.

rice is done, and he must have the loan returned. So that here we are between two fires, and are reminded of the old saying "Go borrowing, go sorrowing." The rice must be had, we are constrained to buy in the nearest bazar at some exorbitant rate, or send coolies to Gampola, to purchase the rice, and return it to our obliging friend. Judge of the feelings of our starving coolies on being sent to carry loads of rice to their fellow-labourers, on another estate: they themselves being in want, and dare not touch a measure of it. This borrowing of rice was a sorry job; the expense of sending for it, and sending it back, if taken into consideration, frequently made the article dearer than if we had actually bought it at some very high price when we first required it; but what could we do? It often was not to be bought at any price.

Manuring was little practised, and certainly not to any extent, which was as well, because, if we did not weed or prune, it was useless to manure. There were comparatively few estates on which cart-roads were cut, so that any operation in this way was carried out by cooly labour alone. This was done by means of open baskets made of bamboo, similar in shape to a teacup. The baskets were made on the estate. Itinerant gangs of basket-makers perambulated the country, visiting the various estates in search of employment. When obtained, the superintendent made an engagement with them to furnish so many hundred baskets, at so much each: the general price given might be 4d or 6d each, it being also in the engagement whether or not the basket-makers cut and carry their required material, which are cuttings of bamboo. This bamboo is generally, in many of the jungles, found growing luxuriantly in patches. Some open shed is given up to the basket-makers, in which they can work. Their first proceeding is to go out into the jungle, with long knives, in search of bamboo, which they cut down and carry in considerable quantities to the shed assigned for their use, then with their knives they slit the bamboo up into strips of about half an inch thick, scraping off the bark and all rough fibres, then the framework of the basket is set with strong pieces of bambo, so that it presents somewhat the appearance of a ship in process of building, only round; the long strips of bamboo, about half an inch thick are then fitted and twisted in round these ribs, beaten tight down with the back of the knife. One man will make from three to six of these in a day, according to his experience. As these baskets were made of green wood, it was advisable to keep them a few days in the sun before using them.

The manuring was soon got through. The pulp-pit

MANURING AND DRAINING.

was emptied, then the heap at the corner of the stable ; cattle were rarely kept, or if so, in any numbers. Then all the refuse accumulations round the "lines," and the manuring was done. What are now called artificial manures were never, or at all events seldom, thought of. When the manuring was done, so were the baskets. Ghosts of baskets might be seen lying about everywhere, sides torn, and bottoms out. What matters, before our next manuring time came round, the basket-makers would be back again.

Draining was unknown. What numbers of fine estates might have been preserved to their proprietors had they preserved the soil.* In some instances where draining was attempted it just made matters worse.

In the district of Kurunegala, I once saw a plan of draining adopted, called Guthrieing, a pun upon the name of the superintendent who instituted it. His name was Guthrie. On the slope of a hill, a trench was dug between the coffee rows, straight up and down the hill; the earth dug from this trench was heaped up on the roots of the trees, below the stem, on each side; this, no doubt, was a very good plan if you could get the earth to remain there, but, after the first heavy fall of rain, the water came tumbling down these trenches like a cataract, gradually it carried all the loose earth along with it, until the estate was left with little but bare hard sub-soil, on the top of which the roots of the coffee were exposed to the action of the weather. A more melancholy sight was seldom to be seen.

A French dentist from Mauritius made his appearance in Kandy, in the exercise of his calling. He had discovered such a wonderful manure, that coffee could be made to grow and bear crop anywhere, and on any soil. His name was Perindorge—and Perindorge manure became all the craze. It simply consisted in collecting a large amount of vegetables, such as leaves and twigs of trees, green grass, weeds, or any vegetable production, in large quantity: put all this into a big hole dug for the purpose, water it well with a solution of sal ammoniac, saltpetre, and common salt—I forget the proportions of each—until the whole fermented and rotted. The manure was well enough in its way, but it took an enormous amount of material to make a small quantity of decomposed vegetable matter, so that the expense of collecting material was excessive as compared with the quantity supplied. Coolies were employed collecting green leaves all round the jungles. What a mass they appeared when all put into the big pit, but how small was the result after they were rotten. Perindorge's manure did not remain long in vogue.

* N. B.—Ed.

WEEDING.

It died a natural death, and I do not think the originator of it ever returned to Ceylon, to make any enquiry as to the practical results of his wonderful discovery. He was a little sharp man, with close cropped grey hair, and, from his charges, must have taken away a good deal of money in the exercise of his calling.*

What would the present generation of planters think of the old system of weeding? It was no system at all. People never thought of weeding until actual necessity called for it. On a new clearing, what was the use of weeding? There were no weeds. By-and-by, patches of weeds appeared here and there, they grew, until they came to seed and injured the trees; then batches of coolies were sent out in twos and threes to go to wherever these patches appeared, in fact to go where they liked. A few men might be seen here, there, and everywhere, all over the estate wherever green spots might be seen. These spots came to seed, and, of course, spread; gradually they enlarged, and, before the planter could well understand the reason of it, the estate was a mass of white weed and Spanish needle. Then came the regular beating down of weeds with mamoties, twenty, thirty, or fifty trees per man a day. It was merely transplanting them. During the rains, instead of growing upright they grew horizontal. Nor was this all; the planter could not look after his weederers. He did not know where they were, after morning muster. A few men were ordered to several spots all over the estate; perhaps they went, and perhaps not. The knowing hands chose their own spots, perhaps went to the lines; in the former case they would idle their time, and, when they saw any signs of the approach of the master, would commence vigorously to work; in the latter case, if detected, they were going for their blanket, or what not, or probably had been suddenly seized with violent pains in the stomach; then the culprit would press his hands on it and pretend violent pain. The kanganyes

* Perindorge was here in the exercise of his profession as a dentist a couple of years ago, and has arrived in the Island once more as these pages are passing through the press. As to the estimation in which his compost is held, see Brown's Manual and Grigson's Essay. We recollect our good friend Tytler decrying the vegetable manure while holding up his own mineral mixture as a "perfect cure." Both are good, but neither is sufficient alone. If to two parts of "Perindorge" one of cow-dung and one of "sombreorum" could be added, and the united products applied at a moderate cost, we suspect the question of manuring would be solved.—Ed.

BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION.

winked at all this : it paid them to do so, for report said each got a premium from the cooly for every day he was allowed to slink from his work without detection. The kangani appeared at the bungalow in the evening to check the morning muster ; all were present, those who were absent tipped him. Those who did not agree to his extortionate demands were absent for half-a-day, no matter how hard they might have worked. The master took matters very coolly ; he marked down the names in the check-roll as represented by the kangani, the principal sufferer in the matter being perfectly unaware of what had taken place, until the kangany told him he had punished him, and marked him absent. Perhaps he was not told at all. When pay day came round he then knew it, and was informed by the kangani, he had better pay a rupee or two, as perquisite or premium to prevent a recurrence of the action. This the coolie was fain to do, and lapse into idleness, because it did not pay him to work.

The result of this would probably be coolies would run off. The master got a bad name ; he did not pay them properly. The kangani was never blamed, the coolie dare not do that ; he might require or desire advances at some future day, or very probably on the principle, that the "kettle won't cry black to the pot." "Ain corbie winna pick out another's een." A common gang kangani could not well go on this way for any length of time. He would soon be without coolies, and find it rather a difficult matter to procure more. These remarks apply chiefly to what were then called head kanganies. The head kangani was the old substitute for a conductor, or assistant ; on some estates where he had acquired the *ear* or confidence of the master, his influence was immense, his word was taken for everything, and woe to the unfortunate sub-kangani, or coolie, who came under his displeasure. During crop time, if a neighbour required assistance in labour, from another estate, say on a Sunday, of course the master's consent was first obtained, but this was merely a point of etiquette, nothing would be done without gaining over the head kangani ; of course there was just one way of doing this : tickle his palm with—rupees.

When on a visit to a friend, I have seen on pay-day, at the pay-table, the head kangani, dressed out for the occasion, any amount of red turban and white cloth. He had a bag in his hand, and a few of his admirers and parasites behind him, a clerk was at his side with steel pen and talipot leaf, for the head kangani could not write ; this was far beneath his dignity. As the names were called out from the

HEAD KANGANI AS MASTER.

check-roll, and sums counted out, the head kangani swept them into his bag, and the clerk made a note of it on his talipot leaf. On expressing my surprise at this system of paying, the master told me, it saved a great deal of trouble, and was soon got through, that the head kangani took the money to the lines, and settled with the coolies, and I have no doubt he settled the matter in a way peculiar to himself.

His duty was a difficult one in this way, for he had to humour and please two conflicting interests. If he attended to his master's interest and worked the coolies, he displeased and lost his influence with them. If he humoured the coolies too much, the master was down upon him, and threatened him with the *sack*. It required a good deal of diplomacy to smooth over and arrange matters so as to please both parties, but your real head kangani was a thorough diplomatist; let him alone for any amount of "blarney"; and on looking back on those times, it seems now almost incredible the *quiet unostentatious* influence the head kangani used to possess. He had generally a corner room of the lines to himself, his chief badge of exalted dignity being a plurality of wives, and in front of his home groups of coolies might always be seen in the evenings, discussing their wrongs, or having them redressed.

But this system of head kangani superintendence and power began to give way before the influx of European superintendence. The head kangani was fain to make friends with the *sinna durai*; in fact they sometimes become too close friends, and the newly-arrived raw assistant would consult and give way to him, for who could give him better or more general information on the work, coolies, and all details of labour, than the head kangani?

At length even the very assistant would come under his influence. During a wet day he need not go out. The head kangani would settle everything and come and report in the evening. After some time a hint would be given, that master's "water-proof" was good for the rain, and the grateful assistant would consider he could not do less than present it to the head kangani.

These remarks are by no means meant generally to apply to the whole planting community of these times, but none who recollect the days of old can deny that many similar instances to what has been stated here actually occurred.

Head kanganies were useful people if kept in their proper place, well looked after, and not given way to. I should think they are now in a great degree a thing of the past, at least I do not think the

City
master
or
assistant

THE CONDUCTOR SYSTEM.

power they possessed then anywhere now exists. I have known of some of these men's monthly pay from the estate alone averaging upwards of £5 or £6 or even more. The system of pay was from one to two shillings a head on every cooly who arrived under his influence, and one pound a month extra from the estate as a substantial token of head kanganship. Nor was this all. He often, almost always, had a private gang of his own, generally the largest on the estate, from which he drew an additional salary, of say a penny a head per day, on the out-turn. After this the conductor system began to come into use, more extensively. Educated Sinhalese, who could speak English and Tamil, Portuguese, Burghers, in fact any one with a smattering of English, who could "call the roll" and do up the check-roll, no matter what their antecedents had been or whether or not they knew anything about coffee; their pay was from £3 to £5 per month, and the head kangani was subject to them. He did not flourish under this new arrangement; there was now a check or spy on his transactions, and the one would bring tales to the master of all sorts of misdemeanours committed by the other. The head kangani's power gave way, and very often his office and influence became lower, until it began to be realized that his place and position were nominal and unnecessary. The head kangani, however, would not give way without a struggle. He would leave, and take all the coolies with him, but, when it came to the point, it was found he could take none, or few, these few being only some of his personal attaches or those who were largely indebted to him. The coolies, although apparently devoted to him when he was in power and favour, after he was gone began to speak all manner of evil of him, candidly told all his misdeeds and how he had robbed and cheated both them and the master. The peculiarity of the coolie is such, that, so long as any one is in power, they will studiously conceal and avoid speaking of all his evil doings, but whenever he is in disgrace, or discharged, everything comes out. So that the indignant master is apt to exclaim, "Why did you not tell me all this sooner?" But the head kangani would sometimes make a final and frequently a successful effort. He would gain over the conductor to his side, and the two would act in unison, quite understanding each other, but before long there would be some quarrel or dispute, and the master would often be quite put to his wit's end, in order to determine who was right and who was wrong, a difficult question to settle, simply because no one would, or perhaps could, speak the truth.

CHAPTER V.

WHY COFFEE-PLANTING DID NOT "PAY" IN THE EARLY DAYS.

The remark in the last chapter that the old system of weeding was no system at all is likewise applicable to that of pruning. The planter could not afford to "lose much crop by pruning." He would take an opportunity when any portion of the estate had become overgrown with wood, in fact run wild, so that no crop was on it, then to prune it, or rather cut it all to pieces. Primaries would even be cut off within three or four inches of the stem; at a little distance off this pruned portion of the estate would present all the appearance of being merely a barren piece of ground, the bare stems of the trees not being visible. Nothing could be more puzzling than to make a commencement on these overgrown trees. They were a mass of matted wood, a luxuriant vegetation of small twigs and leaves on the outside; inside, white, glazed, and dry sticks; the best way to do with a tree of this sort, at least it was thought so at that time, was with an open knife thrust in the hand to the stem of the tree. Settle the knife with the sharp edge towards you, draw it out. This done two or three times made an opening in the tree, and you then saw what you were about. A very usual plan was to prune one-half of the estate one year, the other the next. It was quite a common thing when a planter was walking over his estate with a friend to hear something like the following expressions:—"This field has not been pruned for the last two years. Therefore I have been obliged to use the knife very heavily, but it will give a good crop the year after next." This was going in advance of "next year." Then we would come to another field unpruned. The remark would be:—"We have a tolerable crop on this patch, and so I judged it right not to prune it. You see we cannot put the knife on a tree without cutting off some blossom, so I will take crop and prune it next year."

Hand saws were almost always in use, one saw to two men. Then there was no distinct rule about topping. Some thought, the higher their trees were, the more crop they would get—for "Did n't it stand to reason that you would get double the crop off a six foot tree than you would off a three foot one" Then, when the mistake began to be apparent, pruners with saws were set on, to take a foot off every tree; that after a time did not do, and next season they were at it again taking off another foot, or perhaps two—no easy work it was, and a very expensive

PRUNING.

thing was this topping with saws. Thirty or forty trees per man per day was good work—whereas, had it been done when the tree was young, a top with the knife would have been sufficient and 300 or 400 trees easy work, nor was this all the expense, for of course, after this saw-topping the whole estate, the rows was obstructed with the tops so cut off. Coolies could not weed, pick, or do anything; every row was filled up with these tops. So men had to be put on with cattles or knives to chop up all these tops -or carry them away—burn or bury them; if this was not done speedily, the weeds grew up through ther, forming a tangled net-work of weeds in the rows, so that it was almost impossible to pull them up. As many had to top down their trees with the saw from the mistake of allowing them to grow too high, so also some, after topping their trees at two and a half or three feet, regretted it, and wished them to grow higher again. They thought they could very easily do this by allowing a sucker to grow up from the apparent primary: this I believe was eventually found to be a mistake, for, besides utterly disfiguring the trees, the sucker has never, or seldom, been found to answer the purpose of the original stem. What bunches of suckers the trees used to throw out, after being topped with the saw! And if, as was very often the case, labour could not be prepared to take them off, what a ludicrous appearance the estate presented, if one could possibly call such a melancholy sight ludicrous. The tree was quite lost in, or hidden by, the bunch of suckers at the top. Very probably the weeds were as high as the bunch of suckers concealing the coffee tree: so that, at a little distance off, the clusters of suckers seemed growing out of a mass of white weed and Spanish needle. Many may exclaim, "This is rather over-drawn, this is a touch of the long bow." To such I would say, "May you never see the sight!"

The suckers would get sometimes so strong as to require a knife or saw to take them off. The idea of pulling them off with the hand, why, it would destroy the tree! Take a very fine old strong sucker, give it a sharp pull down, and very likely you will split down the tree: cut it with the knife without taking out the eye, and half-a-dozen at least would take its place. When suckers got very bad, they would be temporarily kept under, something on the same principle as beating down weeds to save the trees. Coolies would be put on who would make a grab or tear at them, pulling them down: some would come off, others would hang on the tree, the small ones remaining untouched, speedily to come on with re-

WEEDS AND SUCKERS.

newed strength, on being relieved from their stronger brethren.

These suckers weakened every part of the tree; the primary branches would get thin and drooping, and, instead of standing straight out, would fall over, giving the tree the appearance of an umbrella with a large bunch of something on the point end.

After a night's rain, coolies turned out to work amongst this mass of weeds and suckers were objects to be pitied. Their cumbly, cloth, and jacket, if they had one, were soon as if they had been steeped in water; they got numbed and chilled, their hands quite powerless with cold and wet, until they became quite unfit to use them. Then they would stand cowering and shivering, until the master, if there seemed no chance of the sun bursting forth, would tell them, not to leave off, that had been done long ago, but to go to their lines. It is astonishing how such an order would suddenly brighten them up. A set of inert, shivering, powerless creatures would start into sudden life and action, and the race home would put some circulation in their blood. The knowing ones would strip off every rag they had on, and get under a cold-water spout, make a rush for the lines for a dry cloth, if they had one, if not a stick fire was speedily lighted, before which they were down on—(what shall I call it, so that the uninitiated may comprehend the position?)—their “hunkers,” and were soon enveloped in smoke, for no amount of smoke seemed to incommode the coolies: on the contrary, they seemed to enjoy it. The position referred to is not sitting, although somewhat similar to it. He sits down upon nothing.* His knees are drawn up under his chin, so that it rests upon them. His arms are clasped round the shins under the knee, over which the back and head bends, until the whole body is formed into somewhat like a ball. Thus, as it were, all the natural heat in the body is condensed, and there is no waste or escape, and thus he will sit before the fire invisible from smoke, until he becomes warm. How they can stand the smoke, is a mystery, for often, in going in search of a cooly, it was impossible to distinguish if there were any in the room or not, and, the very likely unwelcome visitor, if it was “master,” would suddenly retreat coughing and choking, his eyes running with water, while the cooly or coolies of whom he was in search were comfortably seated as

*Sheds
used as
dwelling
places*

* Sitting on their “hind legs” was the description a Munich artist gave us of a scene he witnessed at Kalutara, when a number of natives were looking on at an open-air theatrical performance.—Ed.

SCARCITY OF TOOLS.

before described, without the slightest inconvenience. If the master missed a man from the working place, and went to the lines in search of him, on entering the dark room, dazzled by the sudden change, and somewhat blinded with smoke, he would for some time see nothing. The cooly was well aware of this, and would speedily clamber over the low partition wall, into the next room, and probably into several others, in succession. Then peeping out of the door of his last landing, if all was clear, he would make a bolt back to the working place, where, on the master's return from his unsuccessful search, he would see him hard at work. Probably no questions would be asked, as the cooly would be considered as having never left his work. It would be almost useless to make strict inquiry amongst the others of the gang as to the exact state of matters: it would either lead to a long list of falsehoods, or "*Teriya illai*," "We know nothing about it." They won't tell on each other, unless there be some private spite, dislike, or quarrel. A very common trick used to be, to come to morning muster, without the pruning-knife, then, instead of going straight to work, they had to go back to the lines for their knives.

we don't
know

The system now generally adopted of giving out the pruning-knives every morning at muster, and taking them in, when work is done, in the afternoon, has put an end to this subterfuge.

The remark about pruning-knives was equally applicable to all tools. The system was a promiscuous giving out of tools after morning muster, or rather letting the coolies help themselves from the miscellaneous heaps scattered about all over the store, the result being that few or none brought them back in the evening. When the bugle sounded at 4 p. m. to leave off work, the cooly would throw down his hoe, and make off. Some who had good tools would hide them, so as to find them next morning. Next morning they were absent, or perhaps ordered off to some other work, and the hidden tool was forgotten and lost. Sometimes when tools became very scarce, we knew there were plenty on the estate somewhere; we would make a raid in search of them; this was generally once a month, before pay day. The rooms of the lines were all ransacked, searchers were sent out into the coffee, and any number of mamoties, axes, scrapers, &c., found stowed away below logs, under coffee trees, and sometimes even buried in the soft loose earth. Where the digging of drains or manure holes had been going on, this sort of thing was a great annoyance, and hindrance to the work. Tools were never to be got when wanted, it was useless ordering

THE KANAKAPPILLAI.

off a man, or set of men to any work, under the low grumbling growl of "*Manvetti illai*." Then came the institution of the office of *kanakappillai*, which means literally the account-boy. He had charge of the tools, which he issued every morning, taking down the names of the recipients, and at 4 o'clock p.m. when work was done, he was in waiting with his tool book at the store to take back all the morning's issue. If any failed to deliver the tools issued to them in the morning they were reported to the master to be dealt with as he might deem expedient. It was necessary for the *kanakappillai* to be a sharp clever writer, as it was often necessary for him to take jottings and notes with great rapidity. In despatching coffee out of the store, it might be to carts many miles off, he took down the names of all the men who were loaded and sent off with the coffee bags; he then proceeded down to the carts, and checked the delivery of the coffee there. If this was not done, we had no security that the coffee would be *all* delivered at the carts, thus: Suppose we sent off from the stores 100 bags, and the cartmen came up and reported having only received 99—how were we to find out who the missing man was? Not that there was much risk of him stealing or running off with coffee, the greater probability being that, finding himself unequal to the load, he would deposit it somewhere, and quietly lie down, or go home without saying a word, so that we had to undergo all the trouble and anxiety of searching out for the missing bag, which would have been quite prevented, had the cooly briefly reported the case at head-quarters; but no, he would not do that, the master might not believe him, would probably call him a lazy fellow, and stop his pay. Thus the great importance of cooly having confidence in their masters. Let the master be as strict as he likes, the cooly will never find fault with that so long as he is *just*. A cooly never finds fault with justice, even when it goes against himself.

The *kanakappillai* had also to measure out rice from the store to the various gangs on an order from the master. He also received and measured the rice when brought up by the coolies from the carts. This was a necessary check upon the coolie, for, if the certainty of this was not before him, he would be apt to purloin on the road, leaving a few handfuls at some wayside hut, having an equivalent in the shape of currysuffs, or perhaps *arrack*. On some of these measurements I have known as much as a quarter of a bushel short—out of one—and no amount of threats could elicit any explanation as to where it had gone to, or at most the bag was bad, it was badly sewn, or

*he man-
noty -
this is
a sort of
large
hole -*

*a spirit
distilled
from the
cocoanut
tree*

*account
boy*

CUMBLIES.

there was a hole in it, the rice had fallen out. Of course this could not be permitted, and the deficient amount was charged against his pay, but, what matter, the coolie had the present use of its value, and, like all uncultivated people, they are but too apt to make a future sacrifice, for the sake of a present gratification, and it is not certain that this feeling is peculiarly applicable to coolies, for we meet with a good deal of it in more civilized life.

The kanakappillai was very useful in paying the men. He saved copper money or rather the use of it. Supposing a man's pay was 8/7--we paid him 8/6, and told him the kanakappillai had him written down for 1d. So on with all the odd coppers. After paying was done, the master would sum up all the odd coppers due the coolies, and hand the total amount in rupees to the kanakappillai, desiring him to divide amongst them; this he always did very exactly, and I never heard any complaints; on the contrary they always said they had been paid, but how so I never did properly understand. And it was the same way in issuing rice. We did not require small measures. We just measured out the total in bushels to the whole gang, directing or telling the people that the kanakappillai would distribute correctly amongst the smaller measurements due to each--and this he always managed without causing any disputes or ill-feeling. So that that the kanakappillai, if a sharp, honest and clever man, which they generally were, or they would not have been selected for the post, saved the master a very great deal of petty trouble, in fact did or managed their little matters far better and more expeditiously than he could have done himself. But we are unconsciously lapsing into modern times and institutions. In olden days, the head kangani managed those things, managed them for his own interest, and mismanaged them to the loss of his master. The head kangani had also charge of the distribution of cumblies. He was held responsible for their value, supposing they were issued through him. He particularly paid the master for their value, say 2s. each; he would then let the account run on with the coolies, and eventually charge them 2s. 6d. or 3s. each, he himself pocketing the difference. On this being sometimes brought to my notice, and on remonstrating with him on this extortion, his answer was fair and plausible:—"Master holds me responsible for the cumblies, or rather their value. What if any one loses one, steals and sells one, or runs away? I must pay it. It is therefore only fair and just that I be fortified against any such losses." Let him alone for losses! He took good care of that; besides, if he did lose on rare occa-

HOLING.

sions the profits generally realized by him amply made up for all or any such. Nothing was more common than for the head kangani to lament to his master on the losses he had suffered from a runaway cooly, while it was more than probable his own extortionate demands, not his just debt, had caused the cooly to bolt off, as his only chance of settlement!

The coolies of these times did not do nearly the amount of work that they get through now, although they received fully one-third more of a balance due than they do now. The work was also much deficient in quality. I have a very distinct recollection of my first experience in holing. We commenced tasking a raw set of incapables at twenty holes a day, eighteen inches deep. The first day they managed five or six. We kept them at work till dark, and got the length of seven! The kangani was sent to a neighbouring estate, to satisfy himself that twenty holes was a very easy task, as there, on much more difficult ground, they were cutting twenty-five. This report had no effect. They did not care what other estates did, they could not do it. They were threatened with court; "no pay, no rice": all was of no avail, until at last one morning no one appeared at muster. On proceeding to the lines all was quiet. They were desolate, fires out, no inhabitants. The coolies had bolted during the night. It was in vain to seek them out. What was the use of them, with a hundred acres to hole, and within six weeks of the south-west monsoon?

So, consulting with the Sinhalese contractor, we went down to the villages, and succeeded in procuring a number of Sinhalese labourers at one shilling and one and sixpence a day. They worked very well for a week, and then asked for their pay, as they wished to go home, see their friends, and purchase rice—and would be back to work on Monday. This, being a very just and reasonable request, was granted. They went off, and never returned. There was nothing for it now but to take a trip down-country to try and get some responsible Sinhalese man to take a contract. It was no use the master and conductor living on the estate without labour. So off we went to Gampola: we soon got a man who *promised* to do all that was required. He could undertake the holing of the clearing, but he must have twenty pounds, advance to bring coolies. I knew nothing of the man, and asked for some security. The Sinhalese conductor and he then commenced a long talk, without which nothing can be done. However, the conductor persuaded me that he knew him, he was a "very good man," &c. Knowing their characters as I do now, there was no manner of doubt

BOLTING AND CHEATING.

that the conductor had received a bribe to gain over the master. The money demanded was paid, the contractor and his men were to be on the estate in four days, and we were to have lines, rice, and tools all ready. At the appointed time he duly arrived—with six or eight men : but what matter ? “Plenty more were coming.” He had merely brought the eight men to make a start and to convince the master that he was a strictly honourable man, and never told lies. “All right,” says I. “When are they coming? Away you go, and bring them as fast as you can. The conductor and myself are surely enough to look after your eight men.” But he did not go : he lingered about the verandah. Not being used to the customs of the people, I could not make out what was the meaning of this. How green we were in those days ! After some preliminary coughs, the conductor informed me, that he had got plenty of coolies, they were all ready to come, everything was settled, except some more advance, and he would now require thirty pounds more. And so the “murder was out.”

Perhaps he got it, or, what was more likely, he got the half of it. After the lapse of considerable time, you would first suspect, and then become painfully certain that the men had bolted. You were now down upon his friend and security, but he also was bewailing his own loss. Had n't he lent him £5, and had not his wife lost all her jewels, for it had just been found out that, before he went away, he had abstracted them from her box, &c.

If you believed all this, your name was Mr. Jolly Green. The contractor and his friend are art and part, and no doubt the latter has had his own share or proportion of the spoil. For it was the friend that first introduced him to the master, as being “a very good man.” Having no wish to be particularly severe on head kanganies and contractors for felling, it may not be out of place to admit, that extreme cases have been given, exceptionally bad ones ; it would be endless to enter into all the tricks of the profession on a minor scale of petty rascalities ; their name was legion. There were, however, many head kanganies and felling contractors that did their respective works, with credit to themselves and profit to their employers, provided all circumstances ran smoothly, and they were not exposed to any trying or peculiar temptations to dishonesty in any form. There were even a few who did their work, and did it honestly in spite of any *moderate* temptation to the contrary, but it might have been that they were not sorely tried.

CHAPTER VI.

COFFEE PICKING AND CHERRY.—FLOORS, WALLS AND ROOFS.

As Mr. Brown and his conductor were waiting for the arrival of the coolies for morning muster, they were having some small talk inside the store. It was the latter end of October. The north-east monsoon had set in; it was cold, and a damp mist was driving through the gullies on the mountain range behind. "They ought to pick two bushels now," says the master, "there is plenty of ripe coffee, but it is a bad day for making a trial of it." "There is plenty of ripe coffee," echoes the conductor, "I'll make them do it." So, when the names were called, sacks and kutti sacks were issued to extra pickers; it was a case of "all hands to pick." "Now," says the master—"Now," echoes the conductor—"if you don't bring in two bushels you will be put absent, mind that, and no mistake. Bring in one bushel at eleven o'clock and another at four. Off with you." So off they go running singly, or in twos and threes, here, there, and everywhere, and in a few minutes nobody was to be seen. The system as at present practised of strictly picking in line regularly all over the estate was not in use. It was considered an expensive way of gathering, for did they not bring in far more coffee into the cherry-loft when allowed to pick where they liked? Talk of heavy work in crop-time! Why, it was the easiest time of the year. The coolies were tasked in the morning as to the amount of coffee they were expected to bring in, and the remainder of the day was spent about the store and pulping-house. The conductor in the afternoon would give a statement of the progress of picking, where there was ripe coffee and where there was not, where there was lots of green coffee and when it was likely to be ripe. But he said nothing about bad picking or the quantity lost, strewed on the roads, lying under the trees, or left to dry on the trees. There must have been an immense quantity of coffee lost in those times, not from want of labour, but from bad picking and a total want of all method in carrying on the work, and simply from the fact that more attention was devoted to the amount of cherry picked per man, than to the picking of the crop. If, at four o'clock, a man's bushel was a measure or so short, he was ordered out to make up the deficiency: he went where he liked, made a grab at a branch, stripped it, ripe, half-ripe, and green; knowing that he would be checked for

small
sacks for
young
the wood

COFFEE-PICKING.

bringing in unripe coffee, he picked out all the green and half ripe, threw the berries on the ground, and deposited the ripe in his bag, brought in his deficient coffee to the pulping-house, had his name marked down, and went his way, nor did it ever enter into the mind of the master, what the result of this unmethodical forcing system was; he had got the full measurement required in the measure of fruit deficient, and he had lost two by bad picking in the green and unripe picked out and thrown away. To such an extent was this system carried on, that it sometimes happened neighbouring bazar-keepers would offer a sum of money for leave to pick the dried coffee that had been dropped during crop, off the ground, of course after crop was over, and report sometimes said that these bazar-keepers, who, from some reasons or other, could make very certain of obtaining this contract used to quietly hint to the coolies to drop as much coffee as they could, for some private consideration, such as a small weekly supply of salt fish or chillies.

The pulping-house itself was a mere shed, a roof of thatch supported on half-a-dozen wooden posts, with a cherry-loft on the top; no doors or locks: all stood open, and sharp coolies have been known when cherry coffee was not pulped over night to purloin from the heap in the cherry-loft a bagful of coffee and bring it in a second time as newly picked. No wonder that the parchment was short, or that the master was under the impression it had been stolen, when the measurement to despatching carts turned out so woefully deficient of what it ought to have been. If there was not enough room in the receiving cistern, the pulped coffee was shovelled out on the ground outside, heaped up, and old bags or mats covered over it to make it ferment, being shovelled back into the washing cistern in small quantities to be washed up as time allowed, and yet I have known some of the highest prices procured for coffee that had received this treatment, which shews that it does not generally ensue that extensive and expensive ripening-houses and stores are necessary for the obtaining of good prices. When looking at the stores of the olden times, what were they to our present ideas? They were better fitted for spoiling coffee than curing it. A thatch roof, walls of wattle and mud, close plank doors and windows, mud floor on which mats were spread to receive the coffee, wet very probably, a raised platform in the centre, planked, on which the dried coffee was stored. There was no ventilation: on the contrary on the doors and windows being opened there was often a damp musty smell. After the coffee was turned over, the whole of the store would be filled with a

PULPING.

musty smell and white particles of mould floating about. The coffee was very apt to, and often did, get quite mouldy. Take up a handful and you would see it white in the middle grain. It was generally a good deal cut in the pulping, and these cut beans got quite rotten and full of dry must, so that on pinching them they were empty, or somewhat of the consistency of rotten cheese. If the weather continued long wet these mouldy beans tainted the sound ones, and it would be worth while now, if any of the old Colombo agents' books are in existence, to compare the general average outturn of bushels parchment to a clean cwt. of coffee now, with what it was then. A great deal of skin and cherry was left in the parchment, which, of course, was difficult to dry, and spoilt it, as the half-dried skin got mouldy, and tainted all the parchment with which it came in contact; coolies were employed on the drying-ground, picking out all this skin and unpulped berries: rather expensive work. The pulper itself was a very original affair; the old rattietrap, which has done such good service in its day, and on some estates is still in use, was an improvement on the older one. I have got a very indistinct recollection of it, but, so far as memory carries me back, a wooden drum wheel was attached to the end of the cylinder, and there was another drum wheel in connection with the sieve. Between these two drum wheels, connecting them, was a band or belt, so that the machine was worked by turning the cylinder; these belts were merely slips of bullock skin, sewed together tight and then passed over the drums. After working a little they would stretch and come off, and then the pulping was all stopped in order to tighten and sew the belt. This was done by means of slips of the skin like a shoe tie passed through holes in the belt made by an awl. In a box close by the pulper were kept these slips of skin, awls, needles, &c., all ready for use when required. I used sometimes to think that the pulping coolies purposely slipped the belt when they got tired of turning the pulper, in order to have a rest, but, be this as it may, the sewing of the belt generally occupied as much time, or more, as the pulping. It was always an excuse whenever the pulper stopped that the belt was slack and required a few holes taken in. When a bullock died on the estate the skin was carefully preserved and stowed away in the store as a reserved contingency against the requirement of belts in crop time. A couple of coolies stood in the receiving cistern with a hand wire sieve or sieves, passing all the coffee through them, as it came out from the pulper, and the quantities of "tails" was something enormous. I have heard of some who were so en-

*Second
Quality
coffee*

DEPRECIATION OF PRODUCE.

cumbered with tails that, in order to get rid of them, they were periodically passed into the nearest stream, or they were heaped up outside to ferment, and, when rotten, in the spare time after crop, were put back into the cistern, tramped out, and despatched as inferior coffee, a fitting name, often so discoloured and rotten as to be hardly worth the cart-hire, and yet the coffee amongst these skins being, of course, the largest size, as it did not or could not pass through the sieve, was the most valuable in quality had it not been spoilt in this system of fermenting.

In some of the far inlying jungle states, what an enormous item of expense was thatch for buildings. I have known a bundle of managras for thatch, which was as much as a cooly could carry, cost 3½d. or 7d. each. Then every building required some annual repairs in thatch. A large store or bungalow would probably require some thousands of bundles, and after it was put on during the dry season, a tearing wind from the north-east, before the thatch had settled down, would lay bare the big rafters or ridge-poles.

In windy situations a framework of jungle sticks was sometimes put up lengthways and across along the roof to keep the thatch in position. This was all very well when the weather was dry, but during the rainy season these sticks intercepted the run of water and rotted the thatch, so that what was gained in one way was lost in another. Then, if a full thatching was considered unnecessary, a new layer would be put on the top of the old: this latter, being quite rotten, decomposed into a sort of earth, received and retained all the moisture, and added greatly to the weight of the roof, so that not unfrequently the rafters cracked and gave way under the accumulated weight. I have no doubt on some of these estates the cost of thatch alone might have roofed the store over and over again with tiles. Who was the first introducer of shingles? * They were unknown in these times. What a mess our bungalow used to be in during the periodical thatching time!

This occupied days, sometimes weeks, and during the process of thatching, if there came on a shower of

* We recollect sending to the *Observer* from Badulla, in December 1840, information on the management of a coffee estate, obtained from Sir William Reid, as the result of his experience in Demerara. In this paper the mode of making, and using, shingles was fully described. But we should think they must have been already in use.—ED.

THATCHING.

rain, the mud floors of the bungalow would stand in pools of water. I quite recollect one night of being awakened by a heavy downpour of rain, when my bungalow was in progress of thatching, and of getting some old talipot umbrellas conveyed over the top of the bed, to keep off the droppings. All seemed right for a time : but, on quietly falling asleep, I was somewhat astonished at again being awakened by a sudden deluge of water over my face. The talipots had not taken off the water : it had accumulated upon them until the pools burst and came down on my face, with the concentrated force of a small waterfall. There was nothing for it but to get up, and look out for a dry corner, probably again to be disturbed before morning with a similar result. The floors of the bungalow and verandah were laid down—it was not considered necessary to be level—with pounded mud and gravel. This looked very well, also neat, when newly done ; but by-and-by, as time wore on, the pounded mud would get dry and loose, so that the floors were simply dry loose earth. Underneath the table, where the planter sat at his meals, a large hole would be excavated by the action of the feet. Also, where he sat at his writing-table, up and down the verandah, where he paced backwards and forwards, smoking his pipe and listening to the complaints of his coolies, a pathway would be worn out of loose earth, and so on. So, it was judged necessary to have a periodical repair of the floor of the house. This was done, weekly or monthly, by filling up the holes with sand, gravel and mud, pounding it in, and making all as level as possible ; after this a solution of cow-dung was washed on the floor. This was done on a dry day, and it soon caked and hardened. No unpleasant smell resulted from this, and the temporary effect was to give the house a neat and clean appearance ; it also destroyed all insects, whenever they began to lodge in the dry loosened earth floor. The mud walls were also washed with this solution : it filled up all the holes and cracks, and prevented the loosened pieces of dry earth from crumbling and dropping down it may be on the bed, couch, or writing-table and materials.

This solution generally made a temporary clearance of insects with a propensity to leap. They leaped out of the house, taking shelter in the dry sand outside, merely to return again, whenever their old accommodation became more convenient.

But the mosquitoes took refuge in the roof amongst the thatch, for in these days there was no ceiling. From this refuge, as evening began to draw in, they would descend in clouds and attack the inhabitant or inhabitants below ; but still we were not to be beaten,

MOSQUITOES.

or rather eaten. We collected a quantity of dry cow-dung, put it in a heap on the middle of the floor, and set fire to it, blowing it well into a red glow. When once lighted it burns and simmers like charcoal, and gives forth a dense smoke. Shut all the doors and windows and let the smoke accumulate inside: this smoke searches into the thatch, and drives all the mosquitoes out, but they are just driven out of their refuges to die, and the bungalow is got clear of them for a time, but plenty more would shortly return to be dealt with periodically in the same way.

However, we got a temporary riddance of the pest, but at the expense of having all our clothes, furniture, bedding, &c., smelling of the cure, so that it was sometimes questionable whether the bite of the mosquitoes or the smell of the cure was the worst. This cure for mosquitoes I first saw practised in Australia, where they used to adopt a somewhat similar course of proceeding when milking a cow after "baling up." They would light a fire of it under the animal close to where the man sat milking, which served as a protection to both man and beast, as no mosquitoes would venture into the influence of the smoke.

But what I have ever found the best cure and prevention of the plague of insects, both in the "days of old" and in modern times, is to keep a good ventilation of air through the house: they don't like fresh air and wind. On going on any expedition, during those times, one invariably found the bungalow uninhabitable on returning, merely because the servants or rather the man left in charge considered the best way to take charge was to shut up the house and go away, which of course then got full of insects. It is odd that whenever any building gets into disuse for a few weeks, or lines are uninhabited, this plague of insects should so increase. Just let any one be bold enough to enter lines in which have been no cooly inhabitants for a fortnight, and let him tell the result. One would naturally suppose that, when human beings left the lines, the parasites would also leave, instead of which they seem to increase.

CHAPTER VII.

DIFFICULTIES IN THE DESPATCH OF COFFEE.

It was five o'clock in the afternoon, the kanganies were dismissed from the bungalow, the names were put down, the check-roll and journal were balanced, Mr. Brown's day's work was done, and he had the rest of the evening to himself. In a corner of the verandah stood a table, on which was a cracked teapot, with a broken spout, a white tea-cup without

CARTAGE.

a handle, standing in a blue willow pattern saucer, and a plate, in which was a quantity of cut cavendish tobacco. Beside the table was a chair balanced on three legs with one of the arms broken: close to the chair was lying a smoking fire-stick, just newly brought in from the cook-house, at which Mr. Brown had lighted his pipe and again laid it down for after use. It must not be supposed from this description of Mr. Brown's refreshment that he was a teetotaller. Not he, but his beer was done, and the amount of his liquor in stock consisted of half-a-bottle of brandy stowed away in the cupboard; this must be kept as a stand-by in case of any visitor or in event of his neighbour Jones looking in, to have a gossip. Mr. Brown was walking up and down the verandah smoking a pipe. Every turn he took he cast an anxious glance to the turn of the road, where it came in sight of the bungalow, occasionally looking at his watch. The "tappal cooly" (boy who went to the post office for letters) was late. He had left at 9 o'clock in the morning with letters to post, and was fully due in return with letters, if any, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Mr. Brown was muttering to himself, "I'll stop that fellow's pay. I'll change the tappal man. 'I'll——" when suddenly round the corner comes trotting a smart active-looking lad, bare-legged, a white cloth round his waist, a blue jacket and a red turban round his shoulders; swung by a belt was a small tin oblong box, which, on arrival in front of the bungalow, he took off and handed to his master. "Well, you lazy fellow, what have you been about? It is five o'clock." To which the brisk reply was—whether true or not, it must be accepted—"Colombo tappal did n't come till late." Mr. Brown still smoking opened the letter-box and took out one letter, it had the Colombo post-mark, and he knew the agent's handwriting on the back. He opened the letter, which was a brief one, and read:—"Dear Sir, —We beg to advise you of having despatched twenty carts with half loads of rice, 250 bushels in all—carts bound to bring down return loads of coffee at 60 bushels per cart, in all 1,200 bushels. We would beg to draw your attention to the importance of loading these carts as speedily as possible, as great complaints are made by the cartmen that a number of our estates detain them for unreasonable periods, which often cause us an extreme difficulty in procuring cartage; besides you must be aware that it is of importance to the proprietor to have his coffee despatched and shipped at as early a period of the season as possible.—Yours truly, A. B. C. & Co."

Mr. Brown threw down the letter on the table and

BAGS WANTED.

walked up and down the verandah faster than ever. He was evidently disturbed. He then entered into the bungalow, went to the cupboard, and took out the half bottle of brandy, poured out some into a cracked tumbler, filled it up with water, and drank it off without stopping. He then sat down on the three-legged chair and apparently became more composed. It may be asked, what is there in this letter to upset Mr. Brown so? Why should not he be very well pleased at having a stock of rice sent up, and getting a good despatch of coffee? But the fact was, he had no bags in which to despatch the coffee, he had supposed and trusted that Messrs. A. B. C. & Co. would have sent by some opportunity a quantity of his empty return bags, but in the way-bill there was no intimation of anything of the sort. He had no bags. The carts would be here immediately—were perhaps already come up to the end of the cart-road, which was some miles off!

Mr. Brown suddenly called out: "Boy!" "Sar!" was the speedy reply emanating from a smoky hovel at the corner of the bungalow, and from a hole in the hut, which served as a kitchen, in answer to the call of "Boy!" out popped a grey-headed grey-bearded man, with a very dirty kitchen towel bound round his waist, quite naked in the breast and arms, and his hands very wet, which he attempted to dry by rubbing against the dirty towel. The fact is he had been disturbed while engaged in cooking his master's dinner of salt-fish, curry and rice. "Boy," says Mr. Brown, "is there any one in the kitchen?" "Yes, sar, Muttu, the cookhouse cooly." "Send him down to the lines, and tell the kanganies to come up?" In a few minutes the kanganies were all in front of the verandah. "Now," says the master, "I know quite well you have a lot of bags in the lines. You never returned any, after the last two rice issues; go down and collect them all immediately." The kanganies protested, and swore by their *eyes* that there were none, and Mr. Brown swore by something else, that there were plenty, until at last he put on his hat, lighted his pipe, and went down to the line himself. First into one room, then into another, bags and remains of bags were found and tossed out of the rooms, bags that had been bags were found, and bags no more, but sewed up into nice comfortable sleeping mats, were also all seized hold of, until a goodly pile was accumulated in front of the lines. Mr. Brown, red in the face from his exertions, surveyed it. "Take them away to the store," says he, "and we will put on coolies with needles and twine to-morrow morning to sew them all up, but we won't

MEASURING COFFEE.

have half enough," and he thoughtfully retraced his steps to the bungalow.

He slept over the difficulty. At morning muste ten good stout men were told of at once to proceed to Gampola, with a letter to some of the chetties for bags, failing which they had another letter to a friend in Kandy, to which they were to proceed, for no doubt the bags would be got there. They received in cash one shilling each for current expenses, and were promised an extra shilling each, provided they returned within a certain period; it was a good spree for the coolies, and off they went with a will.

In the meantime, the old bags recovered in the raid on the lines were being sewed up and coffee measured into them. A curious appearance they had; black, white and brown patches all over, darnings with twine, so that little at all of original bag was left.

The cartmen came and stood by, while the coffee was being measured. shrugged their shoulders, and said it would turn out very short. Probably it would turn out very short, whatever way it was measured. [Being once plagued by a batch of cartmen refusing to take coffee, on the plea that the bushel was too close cut, by way of experiment I allowed a double handful of coffee, extra, to each bag. That is, after the bushel was cut, an extra handful was put in. A note was made of this, and to my astonishment this turned out the shortest delivery in Colombo of any despatch however closely cut! The reason of this appeared to be, that the cartmen presumed on this extra allowance, and took too much: or rather the more you allowed them the more they purloined; however, there were exceptions, as I have known carters deliver in Colombo more coffee than what they received on the estate, but possibly they had not taken full advantage of the liberal estate measurement: in fact, had not stolen enough!]

After the lapse of five or six days, during the whole of which period Mr. Brown was in hot water the carters were constantly in front of his bungalow walking out after him, standing, and otherwise tormenting him. The whole despatch of coffee was loaded, but still Mr. Brown's troubles were not over. The Colombo way-bill stated that £10 in cash, on account of hire, was to be paid the cartmen, on the estate, and there were not 10 coppers in the bungalow. Having fully explained this difficulty to the cartmen, they retired under the shade of an adjacent tree, and had a confabulation for some minutes; they then returned, and said they would take a cheque on the bank in Kandy: there was only one bank then. Mr. Brown as startled: the idea of any one supposing that he

COMMISSION.

had a bank account, and could draw a cheque, was a novelty; and, however reluctant, he was obliged to explain his position to the carters, who again retired and had another long talk. They again returned and said they would take an order on the Colombo firm, Messrs. A. B. C. & Co., and they would manage to get it cashed somewhere on their way down. The difficulty seemed cleared up, so Mr. Brown brought out paper, pen, and ink, balanced himself on the three-legged chair, and wrote:—

“Messrs. A. B. C. and Co., Colombo. Pay to Juanis Appu, or his order, the sum of ten pounds sterling, charging the same to the crop transport account of this estate, as per way-bill No. 4.

“ANDREW BROWN.

“Peela Tottam Estate, 10th Nov. 1844.”

This he read to the cartmen, who expressed themselves satisfied, signed the cart-note, and went off, and Mr. Brown internally ejaculated: “Joy go with you.” Mr. Brown was just sitting down to his dinner: he was hungry, and in good humour, and had quite forgotten all the horrors he had endured from the cartmen, when he saw two heads peeping in at the door; the heads were immediately withdrawn, for the natives have generally as much politeness as not to disturb a man when he is eating, but he had seen enough to spoil his appetite: it was the cartmen, back again! He laid down—not his knife and fork—his spoon; went out and asked what was wanted now. The cartmen produced the money order that had been given them, stating that master had forgotten the commission. Master must be aware that the Kandy bank charged one per cent on Colombo orders, and therefore for this order for £10 they would have to pay two shillings, and they wanted the cash. Mr. Brown declared he had not two shillings in the house, and said he must write out another order, when a bright idea seized him. “Boy!” he shouts out. “Sar?” is the echo. “Send down to the lines and tell the head kangani to lend me two shillings.” After a time the head kangani makes his appearance, to see whether or not the master’s message was true, for it might be a dodge on the part of the kitchen people to borrow for themselves. On being told it was all right, and the exigency was great, he unrolled a piece of cloth from round his waist, and after about five minutes of difficulty unties a knot and from a quantity of rupees takes out one, and lays it on the table, which was handed to the carters, and again they take their departure.

But Mr. Brown’s curry and rice are quite cold, and

CARTERS' TRICKS.

his appetite is gone. The next morning, on getting up, the first thing that met the astonished sight of Mr. Brown were the carters standing in the verandah. "What," says he, "not off yet? What is wanted now?" Their reply to this query is: "A bag of coffee short: in arranging the bags in our carts we found one was deficient." Now Mr. Brown had counted all the bags in the store himself two or three times over, and he was quite certain they were correct. The head kangani had also counted at the carts, and pronounced them all right. He swallowed a cup of hot tea that scalded his throat, left the piece of *roti* (rice bread) untasted, mustered the men, called the roll, and despatched them all to their various works. "Now," says he to the cartmen, "come on: I am going down to the carts to unload the coffee and have the bags all counted." So off they go. The half of the loads are taken out of the carts, and counted, the other half counted in the carts, and so on, all right, until, on reckoning the contents of the last, Mr. Brown suddenly paused in a thoughtful manner: there evidently was a bag short. To make perfectly certain, he went into the cart; he groped all about, gave a bundle of paddy straw lying in the back corner a kick with his foot, and lo, underneath this bundle was the *said* missing bag. This was pointed out to the astonished cartmen, whom he began to abuse. They in their turn abused each other, and all their female relations: it was nobody's fault. But Mr. Brown seemed to have some doubts on the subject, and told them to be off; they were a pack of scoundrels.

The question is, Did the cartmen believe there was a bag short, or was this a trick in order to procure an extra bag? It ever will remain a mystery: the former supposition is possible, but the latter the more probable. In due course the coffee was delivered in Colombo twenty-four bushels short, or about two per cent on the original measurement.

Messrs. A. B. C. & Co. advise Mr. Brown that the carters have complained bitterly of being detained on the estate, that they had no rice for themselves, or food for their bullocks, and that instead of getting the cash they were promised, payable on the estate, they were given a slip of paper for which nobody would give them cash (the said slip of paper had been duly endorsed and cashed): they were obliged to sell some of the coffee to pay tolls, and provide food for themselves and cattle. They further advise him, that, in event of any further complaints of this description, they will be under the unpleasant necessity of dispensing with his services. Poor Mr. Brown: he had worked hard and done his best, none under

BANK BUSINESS.

the circumstances could have done better, and he had expected to have received some complimentary notice of it, possibly it might lead to a "rise of screw," after the crop was off, but no chance of that now. He may consider himself lucky if his services are not dispensed with. Mr. Brown was very down-hearted : even the tappal cooly noticed it, and the dirty man in the kitchen with the grey beard the next morning remarked to the kitchen cooly that the brandy bottle in the side-board was "quite done."

In these days the bank in Kandy cashed the simple written order of the superintendent on the Colombo agency. When the superintendent wished to pay his coolies, he went to Kandy, stood at the counter of the bank, took pen, ink and paper, and wrote :— "Messrs. A. B. C. & Co. pay to the order of the Oriental Bank the sum of five hundred pounds, on account of such and such an estate." The money was immediately counted out, less 1 per cent commission, and he took it away. Of course the superintendent who did this was known, as a man of some position and character. I think the Colombo agencies advised the bank of the superintendents who were to be trusted in this way.

After the great mercantile crashes of 1847-48, the banks became more strict in the way of transacting this business ; they even were chary about a Colombo cheque. What if the house had stopped payment before the cheque reached Colombo ? So about that time commenced a system of the Colombo agency sending the superintendent a letter of credit from the Colombo bank ; they had paid in the money there, and received an order for the amount on the branch office in Kandy, so that the latter was perfectly secure, in paying out the money. Piles of rupees stood on the bank's counter, and the shroff with a thin stick separated from the lot the required amount ; it was never counted, but just shovelled into the bag. Coolies were in waiting in the verandah, we tied up the bags, sometimes sealed them, lifted them on the heads of the coolies, took them to the hotel, ordered the horse to be saddled and brought round, and proceeded on our way. It was one per cent commission on Colombo cheques and orders then, and it must have cost the banks a good deal, getting up specie by the old coach.

In a few cases—to the credit of superintendents, however, very few—this liberty of drawing on the Colombo agency was abused : they drew the money and absconded from the country ; it may be also that they drew money, and used it for private purposes, which they had no right to do, without asking leave.

CARTERS AGAIN.

The whole system was lax and loose, and it says a good deal for the character of superintendents, that as a rule, so few cases of dishonesty took place. Mr. Brown having fully considered the unpleasant letter he had received from Messrs. A. B. C. & Co. determined to write them the full and true circumstances of the case, relative to the detention of the carts, which he did, and in due course received a reply, exonerating him from all blame in the matter, expressing their regret that he had been put to so much trouble and inconvenience, enclosing a way-bill for 500 return bags, loaded in two carts, bound to bring down coffee at current rates; they hoped these bags would enable him to send off the balance of his crop, with despatch, that their Junior, Mr. C., would be up-country in the course of a few days, and would make a point of visiting Mr. Brown, and inspecting the estate. In due course the bags arrived, and, on the cartmen being asked how much coffee they would load, their reply was, their bullocks were sick, and they neither could nor would take any. This again involved a trip for Mr. Brown to the end of the cart-road, to inspect the cart cattle: he found them all fat, sleek, and shining, and no appearance of any sickness at all; the cartmen then declared their feet were sore. Mr. Brown looked at their feet, but could not see anything the matter. The cartmen however declared the mahatmaya knew nothing at all about cattle. But it would not do: if they refused to take coffee, he would send to the police office and give them in charge. Then they asked what the hire was, to which the reply was, sevenpence per bushel. The answer to this was brief but very expressive to one who knew a little of the language: it was simply "Bæ"; they were giving ninepence 10 miles down-country. Mr. Brown said he did not care what they were giving there, it was a question of what they were paying here. So he calls a cooly, writes a note on the leaf of his pocket-book, and sends it off to his nearest neighbour, Mr. White, about four miles off, asking him what he was paying for despatching his coffee. After the lapse of some hours, Mr. White's reply comes stating that he had sent off 200 bushels yesterday at sixpence. "Now," says Mr. Brown, "you see I have offered you one penny per bushel more than I ought to have done, more than the current rate, and you have kicked up all this row, and told me a parcel of lies. I refuse to give you sevenpence, and sixpence it shall be." The cartmen, seeing they were fairly caught, and that Mr. Brown was not to be "done brown," briefly replied "Hondayi." On his return from the cart road, accompanied by the cartmen, he

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Cannot

all right

STORE COOLIES.

found the head kangani had measured the coffee and they had commenced to sew up the bags ; the cartmen wished to see a bag measured, which was done, and found to be half-a-measure short ; another bag was picked out and found one measure short. The cartmen grinned and Mr. Brown was furious. The kangani looked foolish.

"Empty all that coffee into a heap and measure it over again," shouts Mr. Brown. When it was done, it was found to be one bushel too much ! "A nice pack of fellows you are to measure coffee ; are n't you ashamed of yourselves ? Call yourselves store-men, and can't even measure coffee." The storemen said nothing, but took some betel out of their waist-cloths and put it into their mouths. "You're at that again," cries Mr. Brown, "have n't I ordered you not to eat betel in the store, spitting all over the floor and bags ?" and Mr. Brown, being now fairly roused, seized hold of the roller for cutting the bushel, and vigorously applied it on the shoulders and backs of the store coolies. There was a general rush, and Mr. Brown, the head kangani, and the cartmen were left alone. They undertook to measure the coffee, and Mr. Brown cut the bushel himself. After some time, first one head and then another peeps into the store, then they slowly come in, and by the time the coffee is measured the store coolies are all standing in a group awaiting their fate. They fully expected to be marked absent and get no pay for the day ; but the exertions of cutting the bushel had cooled the master down. He threw down the roller, and said quite calmly : "Sew up the bags." The coolies knew the storm was over ; they brought out needles and twine, and were soon settled down all over the tops of the bags sewing away in silence. Not a word was spoken. They knew from past experience that a mere trifle would again raise the storm. How observant coolies are, and don't they know the master, and all his ways. They are whispering one to the other : "Don't speak."

CHAPTER VIII.

DISAGREEABLE FINANCIAL EXPERIENCES.

It is well on in the afternoon, and Mr. Brown is standing behind the weeders on a hill face well up the clearing, and sees cantering up to the bungalow, followed by a horsekeeper, a gentleman dressed in jungle rig-out. He loses no time in descending the hill, for he surmises, and that correctly, that this is none other than "our Mr. C." The meeting of the two gentleman was extremely courteous and

THE VISITING AGENT.

polite. There was no stable on the estate, so Mr. C.'s horse was sent down to the store, in a corner of which he was comfortably tied up, a cooly was ordered out to cut a bundle of grass, and Mr. C.'s horse-keeper had the horse-feed of paddy and gram tied up on his back.

Mr. C., after stating that his time is limited, says he will look over a part of the estate this afternoon, and the other portion in the morning. He said nothing all the evening, but talked on miscellaneous subjects, and the next morning was up and dressed before Mr. Brown. This may be accounted for by his bed being none of the best: it was merely a couch in the sitting-room. He complained of having slept badly, and that it was very cold, and wished he had had another blanket. Did he know that Mr. B. had no spare blankets, and the very one he had slept under was taken off his own bed, Mr. Brown himself had been cold, very cold, but of this he said nothing. During their walk over the estate, Mr. C. occasionally stopped, took out his note-book, and wrote down something. He said little, and Mr. Brown was quite puzzled: he could not make out whether he was pleased, displeased, or indifferent. Mr. C. had put on, or perhaps it was natural to him, quite a stoical, cold, hard, indifferent look. The store was the last object of examination, or rather its contents. It was all duly noted down in the little pocket-book: how much had been picked, how much despatched, and an approximate guess made at what was left in the store.

They reached the bungalow about 11 o'clock for breakfast. The boy had used his master's name and credit, and had purchased from the head kangani a half-grown fowl, for which the master was pledged to pay six shillings. This was roasted, a few slices of salt-beef were fried, and this with a good pumpkin curry was considered quite a swell breakfast, and as much as any visiting agent could reasonably expect; at all events a superintendent upon £8 6s. 8d. per month could not reasonably be expected to provide anything better.

Mr. Brown had the forethought to send an express coolie off after morning muster, to try and borrow a couple of bottles: of *Bass* from Mr. Jones, this gentleman had only one bottle in his house, but, with true planters' liberality, and knowing from his own personal experience the exigency of the case, he sent it. During breakfast Mr. C. was asked if he would take beer, which he said he would. Mr. Brown preferred (?) tea, as beer during breakfast would make him sleepy for his afternoon's work,

INCREASE OF SALARY.

and he had to go to the very top of the hill. He knew very well one bottle of beer was not enough for two, and if he took a glass—what if Mr. C. should ask for another bottle! So he practised a little self-denial, told a harmless fib, and said he “preferred tea.” Mr. C. made a mental note of this preference: really Mr. Brown was a very sensible fellow. After breakfast, Mr. C. settled himself on the three-legged chair, stretched out his legs, and lighted a cigar. Mr. B. balanced himself on the window-sill and smoked a pipe. There was silence for some time: it was broken by a remark from Mr. C.:—“If your calculation of coffee in store is correct, you seem to have secured rather more crop than we expected.” After this remark, Mr. Brown took courage. He stated he had been now some time on the estate, that his pay was small, quite insufficient for any little luxury: in fact, it was all he could do to make ends meet; and that the firm, when they engaged him, had held forth prospects of a rise of pay. Mr. C. knocked the ash off the end of his cigar, on the toe of his boot, coughed, threw the end of his cigar away, rose up, and said:—“The estate is very weedy.” He then looked out, and feared it was going to rain. He ordered his man to bring round his horse. When the horse was at the door, he shook hands with Mr. Brown, and said:—“On my return to Colombo, I will consult with Messrs. A. and B. as to your request for an increase of pay, and will let you know. Get down those weeds as fast as you can”—and Mr. C. went on his way.

After the lapse of a week or two, the tin box again delivered up a letter from Messrs. A. B. C. & Co.: it just hinted in the usual business style at our Mr. C.'s visit to the estate, and that Mr. Brown's request for an increase of pay had been fully considered, the result of which was that, from the 1st proximo, he might put his monthly salary down at £10, and they hoped the weeds were now well down. Mr. Brown crushed up the letter in his hand, went into the house, and lay down at full length on the couch on his back, with his hands under his head. He lay thus, motionless, for a considerable time; he then got up and walked up and down the verandah muttering to himself:—“They might have done it handsomely when they were about it: they might—they might have made it £12 10s. They might have said £150.” After half-an-hour's walking up and down the verandah, he quite cooled down on the subject for he said:—“They might have given me the sack for those weeds: at all events I am better

A PLANTING VISITOR.

off than Jones, for they have told him, if he is not pleased with his pay, he can leave." Mr. Brown began to feel quite cheerful. "Who knows," thinks he, "if I could only get down those awful weeds, but I might get £150 'next year.'" So, like the proprietor, the superintendent under all his difficulties looks forward to and consoles himself with bright prospects for next year. I wonder if it is so with the cooly. I rather think not: his time is the present. When Mr. Brown came in to his breakfast one morning, at 10 o'clock, he was somewhat startled at seeing the three-legged chair occupied. "Hallo, Robertson, is this you? Very glad to see you come at last, after having promised so long." Mr. Robertson held out his hand, but said nothing; he put his chin between his hands, his elbows on his knees, and sat gazing into the verandah, quite absorbed, as if he saw something crawling on the mud floor; perhaps he did not likely notice anything, however, unless he felt it, for his thoughts were afar. At last it all came out. Mr. Robertson had got the "sack," and had left the estate. Of course he was a very ill-used man. Messrs A. B. C. & Co. had used him very badly. It was a very long story, and there seemed to be no end to it. Mr. Brown nodded and said yes and no occasionally, but he said to himself, "I expected this long ago, I wonder it did not take place sooner." It was now Mr. Brown's turn to become quite absorbed. When he said he was very glad to see Robertson, he was under the impression he had come on a friendly visit for the day, but now circumstances were quite altered. Mr. Robertson was evidently come for some indefinite period of stay. He had lost his situation, he had no money, and there was little likelihood of his procuring another place soon. Mr. Brown was a good hand at arithmetic, and he mentally calculated that his increase of pay, £20 per annum, was £1 13s. 4d. per month—a sum quite insufficient to keep a visitor, but he became rather ashamed of himself, at the sordid view his mind had taken of the subject, and endeavoured to banish it altogether, but it would crop up. "Breakfast ready, sar," says the boy—and down they sit. An apology is made for the poor fare: rice and pumpkin curry—no, it was plantain. Mr. Robertson humbly submitted anything was good enough for him; he had no appetite. However it just required a beginning, for he ate a great deal more than Mr. Brown.

After breakfast, he helped himself to tobacco out of the plate on the table, as he had forgotten to bring his own, and it was not worth while going back for it. He lay in bed until very late in the day: indeed,

BECOMING SECURITY.

very frequently when Mr. Brown came in to his breakfast at 10 o'clock he was not up, or just dressing. He used Mr. Brown's combs, brushes, and razor, and his basin, soap, and towels. When he did dress it was merely a flannel shirt and trousers, very often neglecting the stockings, for Mr. Brown's slippers, which he occasionally used, were very soft. If he did not use them, he was not particular and went about the verandah bare-footed. After the lapse of a few weeks Mr. Brown begged to have some serious conversation with him. He told him, he would never get a place lounging about here, and that really he ought to stir up, go about and make inquiry. Mr. Robertson said he had written to several people and had got no reply. "Well," says Mr. Brown in a very sharp way, "before taking my paper and postage stamps you might have asked me, or at all events told me you had taken them," He felt sorry after saying this, as Mr. Robertson meekly replied: "Don't strike a man when he is down." The result of this brush was, that he borrowed £1 from Mr. Brown, and the next morning started to walk to Kandy. After residing some time at the hotel in Kandy the bill was presented, and it was asked to lie over, as there were no present funds. The hotel-keeper asked if he had no friends or reference, and Mr. Brown's name was mentioned, so Mr. Robertson wrote to Mr. Brown, explaining the little difficulty. Would Mr. Brown write and become security? It was only a little nominal affair, to satisfy the hotel-keeper. He had every prospect of obtaining a situation, and he would never be called upon to pay it. He would do as much for him any day. So Mr. Brown wrote, and became security. Some months past away and all was forgotten, when one afternoon Jones looked in, and said:—"Have you heard of the death of poor Robertson? He had gone down to Colombo very seedy with dysentery, where he died."

Just then the tappal coolie arrived, and there was a letter from the hotel-keeper in Kandy. He mentioned, Mr. Robertson had left without paying his bill and had since died in Colombo, that he had made inquiry if there were any effects but there was no thing, absolutely nothing, that a subscription had been raised to bury him. The hotel-keeper further mentioned that he never would have taken him in, and lodged him for so long if it had not been for Mr. Brown's security, and he now begged to enclose the bill, requesting an immediate settlement. The bill amounted to £19 7s. 8d. The two gentlemen had a long consultation that evening as to what was to be done, the result being that

MORE BILLS.

there could be only one thing done, and that was to pay the account: they knew perfectly well the hotel-keeper would take no excuse, and no legal excuse could be offered. Mr. Brown had not nineteen pence. So he sat down and wrote the whole statement of the case to Messrs. A. B. C. & Co., requesting them to allow him an advance of £19 7s. 8d., and forward the amount by cheque, charging the same in their accounts as advance of salary to himself—that he had never troubled them before, and was not likely from the lesson he had just received ever to trouble them again. Messrs. A. B. C. & Co., although strict, were just: they at once complied with his request; they passed no opinion on the subject. All they said was: “As requested, we enclose you our cheque for £19 7s. 8d., for which you can give us credit in your accounts.” This cheque Mr. Brown forwarded to the hotel-keeper in Kandy with the bill for receipt, which in due course was done and returned, thus ending this very unpleasant affair.

In one respect it was ended, but not in another. It was only beginning. How is it that, when one is “hard up,” one’s creditors always send in their bills, with a request for immediate settlement. Is it a contagious disorder, or is it atmospheric, or is it like the cholera, a puzzle to all scientific investigators? Be it what it may, it is a fact, and facts cannot be disputed, however rarely we may try to fathom or trace them out. Mr. Brown, when in Kandy, shortly before last Christmas, had entered Mr. Solomons’ store. He was in a genial humour, and wished a few supplies sent out, in order to commemorate the customs of the old country, and to ask some of his friends to visit him, as, whether he asked them or not, no doubt they would ask themselves—or, in other words, step in—and he must have something “by common”—in the house; so he ordered a few dozen of beer, some wine, a cask of salt beef, a cheese, a jar of butter and a few pots of jam. Mr. Solomons said this was not nearly a cart-load, but Mr. Brown said he could not afford any further purchases. Mr. Solomons laughed, rubbed his hands, and said, the idea that *he* could not afford to make himself comfortable was rather good! Why, there was no hurry in paying—he could pay any time: he was only too proud to have a gentleman of his standing and position in his books—and he had no doubt when he mentioned the circumstance it would bring him hosts of other customers—and he uncorked a bottle of sparkling champagne and asked, nay insisted on Mr. Brown drinking it up—there was nothing to pay; he stood treat. Mr. Brown, under these circum-

BAZAR ACCOUNTS.

stances, did not need any further pressing—but drank off the champagne. After he had done so, he made a great many other purchases: the cart—load was fully made up, indeed it was a very heavy load, and the cart-men had to receive some extra hire, in order to be induced to load it all. Mr. Brown had been in Kandy several times since, and had called and asked for his bill as he had some spare money to pay it with, but the answer always was, “No hurry: any time will do; perhaps you may be wanting something else before long”—and the result was that he did want, or fancied he wanted, something else, and bought it. It was thus that Mr. Brown, without meaning it, or rather unwittingly, got into, or rather was seduced into, debt.

A few days after Mr. Brown had settled his security for Mr. Robertson Mr. Solomons sent in his bill, amounting to somewhat about £20. Along with the bill he wrote a polite letter, stating that he had met with some heavy losses, and had a promissory note for a large amount to meet in a few days, and a remittance would highly oblige. Now if Mr. Brown had had the money he would have paid it at once: he was a quite correct man in business matters, but as he could not pay it he folded up the letter and bill, endorsed it “Solomons, Kandy, £20, unpaid,” and put it away on file amongst a number of other papers, very probably unpaid accounts also, and entirely dismissed the subject from his mind. This was the way Mr. Brown settled (however temporary) his accounts: a method it must be confessed much more agreeable to himself than it was to Mr. Solomons.

A shadow now appeared to darken the window. On going out to see what it was, a (or rather *the* bazar-man was seen standing in the corner of the verandah. On asking him what he wanted (Mr. Brown knew very well, or had a very good guess, what was wanted) the reply was “*Summa. Summa vandura*”—“Nothing, Come for nothing”—to which Mr. Brown very promptly replied “*Summa po*,” but he did not *po*—which means in English go. On the country he stood still, put his hand into his waist-cloth, which bulged out considerably, and took therefrom handful after handfull of small pieces of paper which he laid down on the table. Mr. Brown seeing he was fairly in for it, sat down, took pen and paper, and read off the pieces of paper:—A bottle of oil—how much—7d.—marked down the amount; coconuts, salt-fish, curry stuffs, and it would be endless stating all the small items, which were read off; the bazar-man stated the price, until they were all gone over. Now these small pieces of paper were orders given by Mr. Brown, for articles used in the cook-

Nothing in
particular
I am
convinced
nothing in
particular

Sum po for
Robertson in
particular

THE DHOBÍ.

house. His servant always duly represented to him what he required, and an order on the bazar-man was given for them, and these were the orders now brought up for settlement. When the orders were all gone through, everything written down with the price attached, the sum told was added up, and found to amount to £4 10s. Mr. Brown then took a large piece of paper and wrote down:—"Karuppen Chetti—I owe you four pounds and ten shillings."

"ANDREW BROWN,

"10/11/45."

Big (in the sense of chief) master

This paper he gave to the bazar-man, who held it in his hand in a sort of stupid astonishment, before he had recovered from which Mr. Brown had collected all the small orders lying in a heap on the table, taken them into the cook-house, and burnt them. The bazar-man at last said: "What is this paper?" and was told of its contents. "But," says he, "I want the money," the reply to which was: "Come on pay-day"; and so the bazar-man went away slowly with his head hanging down, intently examining the piece of paper. But, as if he could read it, or rather as if he were reading it, he walked slower and slower, and at last stood still, and put the piece of paper very carefully into his cloth. Before he was well out of sight the head kangani made his appearance, and stated that master's servant had bought a fowl from him some time ago, for the "periya durai's" dinner. Mr. Brown asserted he had not forgotten the circumstance. The kangani required payment, the price was six shillings, master's servant had bought it for this price. On calling the servant this statement was confirmed, although Mr. Brown declared it was a swindle altogether, and that three shillings was enough. The kangani was firm, such was the bargain. So Mr. Brown sat down at the table and wrote out an order on Karuppen Chetti to pay the kangani six shillings on his account; this he delivered to the kangani, told him to run off as fast as he could, he would soon overtake the bazar-man, as he had not gone many minutes. This the kangani did; he required no second telling, and as he did not return it was correctly concluded that he had overtaken the bazar-man and received his six shillings. Again the window is darkened, and a tall black man, bare legs and shoulders, with a very bulky load on his head, wrapped up in a sheet, stands in the verandah. The load seems too big for the man, he is top-heavy, but it is not so heavy as it looks—this is the dhobi or washerman, who has brought, his master's clean clothes. The bundle is taken inside, a hook is produced, and the clothes all laid down

MR. WILDGOOSE.

in order on the bed, and counted. Of course there are various articles deficient, and some others that do not belong to Mr. Brown. After a great deal of squabbling the dhobi promises to bring the missing articles in a few days, to take back the articles that do not belong to him, and have them exchanged, but in the meantime wishes his pay. He was going to Gampola to buy soap, starch, and soon, and he must have his money. Mr. Brown takes a pencil, makes a calculation, and informs the dhobi that he has nothing to get until he brings the missing clothes and exchanges the old ones that don't belong to him for what do. The washerman was obliged to acknowledge the statement as being just and reasonable, and took his departure, and so Mr. Brown got out of his difficulties; but he was well aware all this sort of thing was only temporary. The creditors would be back again, and every time they came back the would be less easily dismissed. So Mr. Brown thought a good deal over these subjects: at last a bright idea struck him. A young man over the ridge had newly come out from England to learn coffee planting under an old stager. Mr. Wildgoose was flush of money, his "governor" was rich, he merely intended to stay with the old stager until he had learned a little about coffee planting, and then the "governor" was going to give him money to buy a piece of land for himself. Meanwhile Mr. Wildgoose devoted almost the whole of his time to shooting. It was all the same what he shot: if he could not get an elk or deer, he shot perroquets and squirrels. He was an enthusiastic sportsman, or rather promiscuous: he always shot something. Mr. Wildgoose had often envied Mr. Brown's double-barrelled gun, and asked if he would sell it, but he would n't. Necessity works wonders. Mr. Brown sat down and wrote Wildgoose: "You can have the gun for £20: terms £10 cash, cheque for £10, and immediate payment." A coolly was despatched with the note, and brought back the reply, written on a coffee leaf, "I'll take it and be over to-morrow." The plan of writing on a coffee leaf was adopted, when writer had no pencil or paper in his pocket, and was thus: on the soft under side of the leaf, scratch so as not to perforate it; a pin or point of a knife will do, failing which a sharp splinter from a log will do. The writing, when newly done, is invisible, but in a short time the writing gets dark brown, and is as distinctly legible on the green as ink on paper. Mr. Wildgoose did come over with his pockets filled with bullets and his flask with powder. They got hold of an old door, placed it against a bank behind the bungalow, 70 yards off, and commence

AMUSEMENTS.

shooting, to try the gun. They shot all the forenoon, until the door was like a riddle, and Mr. Wildgoose's shoulder was so sore that he declared he would not be able to mark the check-roll that evening, and the gun was so dirty that he could not ram down another bullet. He took the gun and forked out the cheque for £10 and the cash for the other ten, and took his departure. Mr. Brown sat down and enclosed the cheque to Mr. Solomons as part of the payment of his account, and received a polite reply from that gentleman, noting having placed it to his credit, and requesting the pleasure of his future orders. He was going to turn over a new leaf, and save, live on curry and rice, and let his friends laugh at him as they like. He sent for the bazar-man, and settled his accounts. He even paid the dhobi the next time he came, and other sundry small bills, after which he found that there were a few pounds left. This he put in a bag, tied it tight, and locked it up.

CHAPTER IX.

A PLANTER'S AMUSEMENTS: JUNGLE LIFE.

Mr. Brown had finished his morning coffee and roti, and he looked out from the end of the verandah. The mist was tumbling down through the mountain gorge. It settled in all the valleys below; there was no sign of its rolling upwards. A thick settled rain had set in, and evidently had determined to make a day of it, perhaps two or three. The kangnies came up from the lines and represented that it was impossible to work, which representation was assented to, and they were dismissed. What was Mr. Brown to do with himself all day? His check-rolls and accounts were all done up, his books had been read so often that it was needless his again turning over their leaves, his newspapers were now no longer, they were old papers. It was evidently going to be a very dull day—but it wasn't. Mr. Jones comes running into the verandah with a gun in each hand over the lock of one was tied his handkerchief, and over the other an old stocking. He wiped the guns, put them inside the door, and said: "There are elephants out in the top clearing." Just then the mist gave a most obliging roll off; they looked up and saw an elephant standing quite motionless at the edge of the jungle. There he stood; sometimes his trunk would curl up, and again be let down, or he would wag to and fro his ears; would give a flap occasionally, but his body was steady. There he stood;

ELEPHANT-HUNTING.

he had come out of the jungle to avoid the dripping wet from the trees.

Now, Mr. Brown was not much of a sportsman, at all events as regarded elephants: he did not see any use in risking his life, and calling it sport: not he, and he told Jones so. So Jones, who was very much excited, began to taunt him. "Afraid, eh? Well, you are a slow fellow. I wish Wildgoose was here." This was enough. Mr. Brown said: "Give me hold of that gun." They examined the primings, capped the nipples, and put some oiled cloth over them to keep them dry, then sallied forth up the hills, but, when they came to the place, the elephant was gone. "He can't be far off," says Jones, "we will track him up in the jungle. So they entered the jungle on the elephant trail, Jones first; the *nilu* underwood was like a wall on each side of them, there could be no escape through it: if the elephant charged them, they must run straight back on the trail. Brown again remonstrated, but Jones was firm. After cautiously proceeding about fifty yards in, Jones, who was first, suddenly stopped and held up his hand over his shoulder. They then both peered through the leaves, and there was the elephant standing about eight or ten yards off. The elephant evidently knew there was somebody about; he was motionless, and seemed listening; perhaps he smelt them: there was no time to be lost. Jones presented and fired, there was a loud shriek, not unlike a sharp railway whistle, a crash, and a rush. Jones turned for the other gun, and saw Brown running off as hard as he could, so, as it was no use his standing there without a gun, he followed him. Mr. Brown, thinking the elephant was after him, just ran the faster, until they both came out into the clearing. "A nice fellow you are to go elephant shooting with," says Jones. "If you would run, why did you not shove the gun into my hand first?"

After they had composed themselves and loaded the gun, Jones proposed to go after the elephant, but Brown said he would not. Jones told him to wait and he would just go a little way in and have a look. On coming to the spot where he had fired, he found some blood, so he went further in on the elephant's trail, but found no signs of him. There was no saying how far he might have rushed after receiving the shot, and whether or not he died from the effects of it was never proved. So Mr. Jones came back, and they both retraced their steps to the bungalow. On arriving there they found Mr. Wildgoose also with his gun, and two or three starved hungry-looking dogs. He had come over to ask them

"POOR, PUSS."

to come down to the chenas below and try and get a red deer, there were lots of them there: so, after having some curry and rice and hot coffee for breakfast, they all agreed to go. They proceeded down to the valley below through tall rank mana grass up to their shoulders, quite wet. The leeches fastened upon their legs, and ticks on their arm and necks, until at last a belt of jungle was reached and the dogs put in. They were not long in giving tongue, they came out into the mana grass, and the grass could be seen waving about where they were running, but nothing else could be seen, until at last the barking became stationary, then became a low growling. The dogs were at bay. They all made a rush, and found the remains of something being worried. After some difficulty they got it away from the dogs, and, after a close examination, Mr. Brown exclaims:—"Why, this is Puss, my favourite cat; which has been missing these two months a nice winding up this to the day's sport. I don't know what you think, but no more of this sort of sport for me. Let's go home." Mr. Wildgoose then said his bungalow was the nearest, and proposed that they should all go there and have dinner: he had lots of stuff, as the provision coolies had arrived from Gampola last night; so they went. Mr. Wildgoose provided them all with dry clothes, and had a hot tiffin of beef-steaks and boiled pumpkin, washed down with a few "horns" of brandy and water, after which they agreed to have some more shooting. A stick about seven feet high was obtained and stuck in the ground seventy yards from the corner of the verandah; on the top of this stick a bottle was stuck with the stick into its mouth, and at this bottle the firing commenced, until Mr. Wildgoose was proclaimed victor, as the bottle smashed in response to his shot. After dinner they talked about nothing but the day's sport, and when it was time to turn in the visitors made pillows by wrapping up their trousers and coats in a towel, a rug was laid down on the floor, and they slept very well, for Mr. Wildgoose had a good stock of blankets; let him alone for that, he always made his friends comfortable, outside and in.

When Mr. Brown got home next morning, he found the head kangani had turned out the men to work and everything was all right, except himself. He was all wrong. His head ached, his mouth and throat had a parched, dried up, husky feeling, and his hand was shaking. He could not understand what was the matter. At last it struck him: that fellow Wildgoose kept such bad tobacco! He must speak to him about it, and advise him to deal with Solomons, and, the next time he went over, he would take a good stock

THE RESULT OF A "SPREE."

of his own with him; he would smoke no more of Wildgoose's tobacco.

Mr. Brown was very unwell, not able to go out to work, as he went into his bed-room, lay down on the couch, and fell asleep. The head kangani had noticed the master's arrival, and came to the bungalow, to report on the out-turn and the various works, but, the master being invisible, he went to the c okhouse. The servant looks into the bungalow, looks through a crevice in the door, or takes a sly peep at the window, returns and reports: "Master asleep." Then the whole doings of yesterday are discussed in the kitchen: they are all known, very well known, the shooting of the cat, even the amount of beer and brandy consumed; it was even told to the kangani, that master had drunk off two tumblers of cold water when he arrived, and that he did not eat any breakfast. The kangani goes out to the working place and reports everything to the sub-kanganies, who in their turn told the coolies. The work now all begins to get slack, and nobody seems to do anything. The head kangani and a few of his favourites go off to the lines, the others sit down and commence to chatter. In the course of the afternoon Mr. Brown visits the working place, but, as he could not tell where they had commenced to work in the morning, he could not tell how much or what had been done: he took the kangani's word for it, and went away.

An old estate proprietor once said to me, "I highly approve of planters meeting together occasionally in a friendly social way. The one receives information from the other, and a little genial society occasionally is needful and necessary, but I do object to those 'spreads and sprees': they are injurious to all parties concerned. The giver of them spends his money, without getting any reasonable or permanent satisfaction for it in any way; just the reverse, for it may be doubted if even his guests think any the better of him for his hospitality. The guests are certainly generally the worse of them; they have not the same interest or clearness of perception in the works under their supervision; the next day they feel used up and 'seedy.' The coolies know all about it, and take advantage of it. It is very probably reported in the lines: 'There is a great dinner over the way to-night. Master is going, he won't be back till late to-morrow, and perhaps will not come to work at all.' The proprietor is the chief sufferer, he suffers in pocket. The day's work is not sufficiently done, or is done badly. The superintendent finds it out afterwards; and quarrels with the people for it, perhaps stops their pay, creating great dissatisfaction on pay-day." Perhaps this

SALARIES.

statement was a little overdrawn, but the first two years are quite correct. It must not however be assumed that this anecdote of Mr. Wildgoose's 'spread' was a sample of planting life. As a rule, many of the planters were hard-working men, according to the light of the times. They had little comforts, no luxuries. Their houses were simply miserable; they had little society, no amusements. The result was, that when they went to Kandy, and any one gave a dinner, and there was any reaction from their dull routine of life, they generally made the most of it, in a temporary spree. One great drawback in the old planting days, was the want of good wholesome substantial food. No man can keep up his stamina long on curry and rice. In many cases the small pay given to superintendents was a positive cruelty and quite calculated to make the recipient lose all self-respect. Fifty pounds a year, and keep up the position and standing of one in charge of two or three hundred coolies. Absurd! The superintendent had to choose between two evils: either to live so very low as would eventually ruin his health, and send him off to die of dysentery in Colombo, like Mr. Robertson, or to run into debt at a Kandy store, as Mr. Brown did at Mr. Solomons'. The small pay inducing penurious living on the part of the planter tended to lower him and his position in the estimation of the coolies, apart altogether from cooly nature; it is human nature, and it may be supposed that the two are very much combined, because coolies are human beings. No subordinates whatever can long pretend respect for a master, who is always in pecuniary straits and difficulties, because this chronic state leads eventually to acts which are not becoming the character and position of a gentleman. And none know better than the coolies, who are very sharp in soon finding out, as to who is, and who is not, a gentleman. I do not refer to a man's parentage or pedigree. That has nothing whatever to do with the subject, but to his general conduct and behaviour as an honourable, upright, and, above all, just man. Now with every intention to be all this, how can a man be just, when the salary he receives is not sufficient for the ordinary necessities of life. If he thinks to do himself justice, and orders a fair supply of creature comforts, he is unjust to his creditors, when he cannot pay their bills. So that, in order to be just to his creditors, he had to treat himself unjustly. Many will say £50 to £100 per annum is taking a very low scale of salary. Such sums were chiefly paid to assistants. Well, take the highest: £200 was about it; in some few cases £250 or £300 was paid; these were the outside, and considered rare and difficult catches.

HOUSE ACCOMMODATION.

But, although this low rate of pay was prevalent, it was good remuneration for the class of men in general employment; they were frequently of no, or very poor, education, people who as adventurers came to the country or were bought out of the regimental ranks.

By-and-by, proprietors and agents imported young men of good education from the old country, but, the bulk of them being raw inexperienced lads, they were, for a year or two, of little use, in fact did, unconsciously, a great deal of mischief. Many, on account of being thrown on their own resources, before character was formed, and from the nature of the life, freed from all social and moral restraints, went all wrong in principle, sunk lower and lower in the social scale, until all self-respect, or respect from others, was gone. Then they disappeared, none knew, and few cared, where. Others, but they were comparatively few, braved and weathered the times, kept steady and true, preserved their own self-respect and retained the esteem of others, and, if they did make a slip occasionally, it was not to be wondered at: it would have been a great wonder if they had not. These few steadfast men became trainers of the next or succeeding race, and so on the current rolled which made the coffee planters of our present time what they are, and what it is to be hoped they ever will remain: a strictly honorable, upright, well-educated, and most conscientious body of men, with a vast amount of responsibility devolving upon them: a responsibility which in no other country in the world represents so few, so very few, instances of breach of trust.

Bad house accommodation, after a time, begins to tell on a man's general character. This is ever a sound recognized opinion in the old country. When one gets dirty and careless in personal accommodation and appearance, worse is not far off, but when such accommodation is the rule of "the service," the results will also soon become the rule. It may be that the state of the times could not be helped, that in every young or new colony it is, or was the same. Take, for instance, Australia, New Zealand, or Canada. Well, these are colonies fitted for the European constitution, and altogether a different question from life in the tropics, but the principle is the same, and I have myself seen that those who had the neat comfortable dwelling-houses in Australia were altogether a more steady and industrious class of people than those who lived in bush huts, without even the semblance of any comfort. These were always very glad of any excuse to get away "to town," where they conducted themselves very much in the same way.

ASSISTANTS.

as those who went to Kandy did, "thirty years ago." The fundamental principle was the same, a relief, an outburst, from the monotony of "bush" or "jungle" life. Depend upon it, a proprietor never suffers in pocket by making his superintendent and assistant comfortable in house accommodation. It is no use saying he can't afford it, he may just as well say he can't afford to weed, prune, and otherwise carry on the necessary works of the estate; because proper house accommodation for the superintendent is just part and parcel of weeding, pruning, and other works. That the "workman is worthy of his hire" is as old as the Scriptures. And, if he is worthy of his hire, so likewise is he worthy of a comfortable residence, after the burden and heat of the day, or for that part of it even during the heat of the day, for it is not always going out to work that constitutes working.

There was once an assistant who was generally understood to be a very hard-working man—no one need prick their ears, and speculate who it could have been or who it was—he is not now in Ceylon. Of course, however, if the cap fits any, in the recollection of any, it may be clapped on his head, and for that part of it over his ears too, for I daresay there were a good many of similar habits, long ago, but not now so. None of the present generation need raise a howl. This assistant was always up and out at the mustering ground before a single coolly appeared, and he might be seen walking up and down the drying ground waiting for the men; he had his check-roll under his arm, his field book and pencil in the other hand, and by the time he had finished his first pipe probably half-a-dozen men would begin to pop on to the mustering ground. He went out behind the coolies to the working places, returned to the bungalow about half past ten, or eleven, to breakfast, allowed himself only half an hour for that meal. If the appu was under any delay in serving breakfast, he kicked up no end of a row; his time was limited, he was under different circumstances from "you, you lazy rascal, that have nothing to do after breakfast, but lie down in the cook-house and go to sleep," &c. He started immediately after breakfast, rarely allowing himself time to smoke; he lighted his pipe and went out smoking, no matter what the weather was sunshine or cloudy, rain or fair, or even a damp drizzling day. The *periya durai* took it into his head to go into some figures and accounts; he was puzzled about something or another, and wanted the assistant to clear it up. So he takes his coat and umbrella and sallies forth in search of him. After numerous futile enquiries a party of weeders pointed to a huge domba tree

"LIKE MASTER, LIKE MAN."

resting with a slight curve over the ground; under this domba tree, securely sheltered from wind and rain, sat the assistant; he was smoking, and a small charcoal fire was at his feet; he had no doubt sent to the lines for a fire-stick, and then had laid it down, so that the fire may have been, in a manner, not pre-meditated, but merely the result of a sudden impulse. Around him were squatted a number of the kanganies, and they were all seemingly enjoying a social fellowship. The *periya durai* did not say much, but he thought a good deal. It is wonderful when once one begins to find out delinquencies how fast one follows on another. It was afterwards mooted, that the hard-working assistant frequently spent a good deal of his time in the lines. And, if he was suddenly called or wanted for any purpose, he would commence rushing about, shouting and bawling, as if he had only made a temporary and unpleasant visit, in order to apprehend some skulkers, and drive them out to work.

There was another assistant who would never have been guilty of anything so low as this. He, like the former, was out all day, allowing himself half-an-hour for his breakfast. Instead of concentrating his work as much as possible, he would try to do everything at once; small detached parties of coolies would be scattered all over the estate, at different works. The consequence was, he did nothing but walk all over the place inspecting, or rather visiting these different gangs. When he left one working party, they knew very well his "route," and about the time he would be back again, and of course they did not work during the interval. It may be said: "But at the next inspection, the assistant would surely perceive what work they had done?" Not he: so long as he saw them working, it did not enter into his perception that they might not be working when he did not see them.

"You are too hard on the assistant." But they were not all so. It was the fault of their trainers the *periya durais*. It is astonishing how the conduct and general behaviour of the manager reacts or reflects on the assistant, and it is for this very reason, that we have so often heard of an assistant, who had been a very clever active fellow under one manager, being quite the reverse, or at all events far short of the mark, under another. "Like master, like man," is an old and true proverb. A story was told of a manager, who, when his visiting agent said to him: "I am astonished, Mr. Big, that you don't go out to the work occasionally and see what is going on," said: "Na, na, sir, Mr. Small does all that sort of thing. I sit in the house and think, and give directions." Just so. His subordinate took a leaf out

MARRIAGE.

of his book. Mr. Big gave orders to Mr. Small, who in his turn gave orders to the head kangani; the latter gave orders to the junior kanganies, who gave instructions to the coolies. Then, if anything was not done, what a trouble it was to find out the defaulter. It was nobody's fault, every one had told another: as it was evident some victim must be found, it was generally some of the most ignorant, know-nothing, do-nothing amongst the coolies, who did not even understand what he had been told, so how could he do it? He was reported to the master as the fellow who had been at the bottom of all this, and was told that for his punishment he had been marked off in the check-roll three days absent. Perhaps he was not paid for three or four months, and the whole circumstances were forgotten. He declared he had not been three days absent, but the master said he had, or why would it have been so marked.

One Saturday night, when Mr. Brown closed his check-roll and declared another week's work done, Jones, who had been sitting waiting until he was through, suddenly exclaimed: "Brown, why don't you get married?"

CHAPTER X.

BACHELORHOOD *vs.* MARRIED LIFE.

Mr. Brown made no reply, in fact never looked up, but again opened his check-roll, and seemed to be very busy. But it would not do: he rose up and went away, saying he must look for his "Ready Reckoner." Now Mr. Jones could easily have said: "Why, it's on the table at your elbow," but he didn't. He saw at once he had touched a wrong chord, and was sorry for what he had said, but how was he to know that such a very trivial, commonplace expression, was going to vex his friend in this way? In those times, proprietors and agents, to write mildly, did not fancy married superintendents. They were under various impressions on this subject. They thought the married man did not work as the single. That if the day was hot the lady would say: "My dear, don't go out in this sun; wait till it gets cooler." If it was rain: "You will catch cold, ague, fever, or some other dire ailment; stay in the house until it is fair, it will soon clear up." If the day was cool and cloudy, and neither of these excuses would answer, she would fall on another resource, more irresistible than those stated. It required to be, because a

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S WIFE.

A cloudy day was a great inducement for a long walk, and a thorough investigation into matters in general. She would say: "Don't go away and leave me all alone. I am so dull, no one to speak to, and then these dreadful servants, they don't care a bit for anything I say; indeed, I rather suspect, they laugh at me, of course behind my back. I am sure they are 'taking me off,' but you know I don't understand a word they say."

Now, what reason had proprietors to think all this, and a great deal more? Was it that they had come through the same experiences themselves, or was it that they thought a greater number of coolies were necessary to go out and in to Kandy for supplies, to run about with letters and notes, and what not? The great secret perhaps was, that any sort of house accommodation and furniture would do for a bachelor; not so for a married man. The general opinion, now, is completely changed in favour of married superintendents. It is considered, and quite correctly, that one with a wife and family is much more likely to attach more importance to his appointment, if a suitable one, than a single man, consequently is more intent in rendering his services acceptable to his employers. The lady, if she is a sensible woman,—as of course all married ladies must be, or they would not occupy that very important position—important, not so much for themselves as for their husbands, who have made such a very excellent choice, and been so highly favoured, and complimented in having their choice accepted. She would take good care that the employer's interest was not sacrificed to meet any of her ideas of domestic comfort. On the contrary, if the day was hot, she would say: "You have snored quite enough; it is time for you to go out. Here is your hat and umbrella." If the day was wet, no doubt she would lovingly bring out his waterproof, and with her own hands place it over his shoulders. What man could resist this loving appeal to attend to his duties. Then see the welcome he will receive on coming back from the work: dry clothes all laid out and ready, a blazing stick fire in the chimney corner; hot tea or coffee, all ready. She had been watching for him coming down the clearing, so that there was no need for calling out, bachelor-fashion: "Boy!" possibly to have no reply, for the boy, boy-fashion, was asleep.

No fear of her telling the "boys" to go to sleep, and thus it happened that she was no favourite at all with the "boys." They sighed over the good old times before she came, when they had all their own way in the kitchen, when the master dried his own clothes, and drank brandy and beer, when he came

blazing stick fire - Only
clearing - a clearing

WEDDED ECONOMY.

in wet, and troubled none of them to make hot tea or coffee. They grumbled and growled at their hard work, held a consultation in the kitchen, and at last all came in a body, and gave fifteen days' notice to leave. They were not going to put up with this sort of thing any longer. The master sighed, but offered no remonstrance, he knew it would be useless. He also knew that his pet servant, who, as a single man, had been in his service for years, and with whom he scarcely ever had a personally serious dispute, was now useless. They were not the same sort of fellows they used to be at all: he could not understand it. Ever since he got married, a sudden change had come over them. He had some private conversation about it with his better half, without any satisfactory result, further than: "Whatever he chose to do, *she* was not going to see his hard-earned money wasted, positively wasted in that kitchen; better have no servants at all." But he would say: "Try it; you will know better about it; mind this is not the old country."

Again, the married planter, having domestic comfort at home, did not care about going into Kandy for a *spre*, he had lost taste for that sort of thing. It was a difficult thing for a neighbour to get him out for a quiet dinner; it was useless asking him to a spread, for would not his wife be lonely by herself? Then his friends would not troop in upon him when he had nothing in the house to entertain them with, as in the days of his single-blessedness. It may be sometimes said these men at all events did anything but bless them. A whole lot of boisterous fellows could not and would not "look up" a married man, and say they had come to dine; they might put the lady to inconvenience, and besides ordinary courtesy required that they should dress somewhat more than in common "jungle rig-out." No, they waited for an invitation, which, on suitable occasions, was always given, and thus began to creep in civilization into jungle life. It was all owing to the ladies. A few of the old stagers, however, would keep back, vote them an innovation on the good old routine, and sigh for the good old times (?) of tough beef-steaks, pumpkin curry; and bad brandy; for then they did not require—it may be only in courtesy—to step out into the verandah to smoke. These were the conservative party of the planting community; no innovation, nothing that was new, could be by any possibility an improvement. I think, on the whole, these reserved old planters were rather liked by the ladies. Probably they took a pleasure in teasing them, or in shewing off all the comforts which they had lost

BACHELOR CRITICS.

by persisting in remaining bachelors. At all events they always tried to impress upon them the necessity of their going home immediately and bringing out a wife. Probably the charming flatterer had some hidden object in view. she would have some female society, a neighbour who would strengthen her hands in the crusade she would like to make on the habits and customs of the planters.

My friends may say : " You are not married : how do you know all this ? You are writing about matters you know nothing about : the mere vagaries of a disordered imagination. Stick to coffee planting : you know all about that, at least if you don't you ought to." Well, I am not married, and sometimes wonder whether it is my fault or misfortune. Oh rash expression ! It should not have been written, but still it must be one of the e three. Is it a man's fault, misfortune, or good fortune, that he is not married ? If it is his fault it is never too late to mend : let him reform and amend his fault. Is it his misfortune : let him submit to circumstances and live in hopes of better times. If it is his fortune let him be thankful and remain in a position to be thankful. For, seriously speaking, there are some men who never were formed for domestic and matrimonial life : they would merely not only be unhappy themselves, but render their wives so, unless they were also of the same disposition.

" You are writing about matters you know nothing about."

Well, a silent acute observer often sees things that he says nothing about, and he knows where the " shoe pinches " on another, but his friend, having made the shoe himself, pronounces it to be an admirable fit, quite the thing ; it does pain a little sometimes on account of these corns, but you can't have everything as you would like ; a very handsome shoe it is, a very good fit, but it is easy to see it sometimes pinches you. Yes, at first all new shoes feel a little uncomfortable ; by and by it will come all right. Remember ; do not overlook the fact, that the " bonds " of matrimony have " coupons " attached to them. These " coupons " are called " babies." You cannot tie them up with red tape, deposit them in your office pigeon-holes, with the endorsement " Unemployed Capital," for, in order eventually to become even self-supporting, a considerable amount of cash disbursement is necessary. Have you got it ? Have you any prospect of getting it ? For this is not a question relating entirely to self, but for the well-being of a future generation or generations. If you are prepared to do justice to the " coupons," by all means go in for investments in the " bonds."

THE "PROS AND CONS."

Mr. Brown came back ; he seemed cheerful, but neither himself nor Mr. Jones said anything about the Rerdy Reckoner. He resumed the conversation himself :—"Why don't you get married? How can a fellow marry upon £150 a year? and with this wretched house accommodation. Besides, if he could, there is no one to marry: for is it not a fact that the few European ladies in the country are all married? I can't afford to go home, and even if I could what sort of a house or rather hovel is this to bring an educated, refined lady to reside in? How would she feel—left alone here all day, when I am out at work? The life is bad enough for me, but then I have my work, and yourself and Wildgoose are capital neighbours. 'She would get sick, have to go home, and we would practically, from the force of circumstances, not from our own faults or wishes, be separated, you may say, for life, for if I can't get a rise of screw, a considerable one too, I'll have just to stick on and grind away, until I am 'laid, to moulder in the forest glade,' unless I can manage to save a few thousands, make a dash for it, go in for a piece of land, which will turn up trumps."

Mr. Brown paused, got more melancholy than ever, and said bitterly :—"Save a few thousands! it was only the other day, I had to sell my gun, a parting gift from my father, to pay Solomons' account, a petty sum of £20, and here am I now talking of saving a few thousands. Absurd, dismiss the subject, cut it, never to be resumed. Jones, have a horn." But Jones would neither dismiss the subject, nor have a horn. He said :—"Let us refer the matter to Wildgoose, and see what he says," but Brown laughed, and said scornfully, almost sarcastically :—"Refer to Wildgoose. What does he know or care about these matters? The man's name is his character."

But Brown was wrong. Wildgoose was that sort of fellow, well up in all the "ways of the world," one who had received a first-class education, one who, if a friend went up to him in sober mood, in trouble or difficulty, asking his advice, all his nonsense speedily disappeared, he would sit down quite gravely, listen to all the "outs and ins" of your case, and give first-rate advice, in a quiet, gentlemanly, sympathizing way, so that even the manner in and by which his advice was given inspired confidence in the recipient.

And this was Mr. Wildgoose's opinion. It was something similar to St. Paul's. If a planter loves a girl, and the girl loves him, they marry for the sake of each other, irrespective altogether of any other consideration, such as bungalows or any other "bungle." The sooner they marry the better, for the

longer a man puts off marriage, in general, the less inclined he feels to marry. The planter ought, in justice to the lady, to fairly represent his circumstances and position, and what she would likely have to undergo, and so, if she accepts the man, she must clearly understand she accepts also his position, so that there need be no subsequent grumbling on this point. Probably much subsequent disappointment has been given to ladies, by planters "going home for a wife," and representing planting life too much *couleur du rose*. It is a curious fact, that mostly all accounts given of this life have, at a distance, a spice of romance in them, which, instead of deterring young men and women from proceeding to the cinnamon isle, rather eagerly impel them to go. At least, with regard to men. The more I have tried to hinder them from "going out," by stating all the difficulties and trials, the more determined they were to go. It just seemed that these very difficulties and trials rendered them all the keener to be encountered. However, when it comes to practical life, it is a very different matter, as when the lady finds her servants have bolted, and her husband comes in after a hard day's work, to find there is no dinner. Probably she has tried to boil a little rice, but it is hard and uneatable. He gets angry, and says the first sharp thing :—"My dear, with all your many charming accomplishments, how is it you never learned such a simple matter, as how to boil rice? Give me a cup of tea, if you know how to make it." The lady will probably retire to her room, and have, as they say in Scotland, "a good greet," and wish she had never come to this wretched place. Perhaps all this is only the beginning of many sorrows. A good deal depends upon the tact, management, and temper, of the lady. She must recollect that her husband has a good deal to try his temper with "those coolies." When he comes home at four o'clock, tired and irritated, he may very likely burst out with some ill-natured remarks which, poor man, he does not mean, and which no doubt he is heartily sorry for after they are uttered. If the lady, instead of retiring to her room to have a "good greet," whatever she may have *internally* felt, had laughed it off with :—"How stupid, but I was in a hurry, knowing you would be hungry. Never mind; here is a tin of preserved Highland mutton, here is a chisel and hammer, open it up. It will be ready in five minutes, perhaps it will recollect to your recollection the day you first saw me, looking for blackberries amongst the heather." Before the tin is well opened, he will say :—"That was a bright day for me, but I fear a poor

UNSUITABLE MATCHES.

one for you!" Her reply will be:—"Your dinner is ready, come, let us be comfortable, and don't talk nonsense."*

Mr. Wildgoose knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and said he was thirsty, he would take some tea. "Tea!" echoed his friends. "Well I never! Wonders will never cease." Mr. Brown got softened, he rose up, took his hand, and said:—"I have done you injustice. I said your name was your character, but now I see you can talk sense when you like. Pity it is so seldom you feel so disposed. But, seeing that you can talk in this strain, why don't you act up to it yourself? You have plenty of means. You are not like me, dependent upon £10 per month, and even that subject to a month's notice from my employer."

It was now Mr. Wildgoose's turn to sigh and look sorrowful. He said:—"A man can't, or rather ought not, to go ransacking about in search of a wife, as he would for some article of household furniture. I believe for every man there is a suitable wife, and for every woman a suitable husband; it is Nature's law. But sometimes, indeed oftener than otherwise, they never meet, or, if they do meet, they don't know it, or don't mutually know it, and then look at the misery entailed by unsuitable matches. Suppose a Partridge tethered to a Wildgoose. Each commences to try different ways, according to natural inclinations. The Wildgoose wants to be up in the clouds or beyond them, the Partridge in the stubbles below. They both strive, the Wildgoose is the stronger—off he goes. He sees in the distance a pond or muddy pool; into it he dives with a dash and a splash, utterly regardless of the Partridge, under the water, stirring up any amount of mud and dirt. He again comes to the surface, cackling and flapping his wings with delight. The Partridge is turning on her back, gasping and choking, until she gasps her last. Too late the Wildgoose finds out, that a Partridge not only cannot enjoy herself in a pool of water, but cannot live."

"All very romantic," cry Brown and Jones, "all very true, but nobody wants you to marry a partridge, and even if you did, supposing you to be a very considerate and tender-hearted goose, especially during the first three months, the partridge, if she was a sensible bird, as all partridges generally are, at any rate in their own estimation, she would have tact enough to seduce you away to the stubble fields, and

* This is so good, that the writer ought at once to get married, in order to realize his own picture of "Bear and forbear."—Ed.

MEN AND WOMEN.

no doubt you would soon prefer the comfort there, as infinitely better than the muddy dirty pool."

But Wildgoose would not admit this. "What stuff and nonsense. You may just as well say, that in course of time the partridge would become quite reconciled to the muddy pool. No, no, every man and woman has separate and distinct natural likings, that will crop up occasionally, check them as you like. You may think they are killed. No, they are not; it requires little, very little, to make them sprout again. I don't refer to *bad habits*. They can be eradicated. What I refer to, is natural dispositions."

Jones kept very quiet during all this discussion. At last he gave his opinion, thus:—"Every man and woman has natural instincts, natural likings and dislikes, and Nature intends, or at all events intended, that these should be acted upon, within the bounds of prudence and propriety. If people would lead more of a natural life, and less of an artificial, these mutual likings would soon mature into something more promising. I speak with reference to the old country, although, even here, this sort of thing is creeping in fast, a dread of what people will say about you. Not that I object to this feeling in a moderate way, for it keeps those in check who are deficient in principle, but why carry it to such extremes? Why should people of fixed character and position be afraid of what their neighbours will say about them? One is very apt to come to the conclusion that those very sensitive people have some, or have had some, now partially forgotten cause, why they should be afraid of the tongues of others, afraid least a word or sentence might reveal some just cause of talk."

Brown said:—"This may be true with regard to men. A man who cares not a straw for what people say about him is either an upright good fellow, or a great blackguard; but what about the women?"

Jones replied:—"Oh, let them alone, let them fight it out amongst themselves; they are able enough to do it, so long as men don't interfere."

CHAPTER XI.

THE FIRE-STICK AMONGST THE COFFEE.—MR. WILDGOOSE IN "THE BLUES."—WHAT PROPER CULTIVATION WILL MAKE OF AN ESTATE.

About the beginning of March, after a month of hot scorching weather, at morning muster the coolies on the "Peela Tottam" estate were informed that Wildgoose Durai was going to set fire to his felled forest,

A "BURN."

at noon, and that they were to hold themselves in readiness, with promptitude, to respond to any urgent demand on their services, in case the fire should catch upon "our coffee."

Between twelve and one o'clock, volumes of white smoke began to curl up; thicker, denser, and darker they became, until it all settled into a dark almost black smoke. This invariably indicates "a good burn." It curled onwards and upwards. It was a bright hot day, not a cloud in the sky, and soon no sun was visible, or, if occasionally, it looked like a huge red ball of fire shining through black smoke. So completely had it lost its power you could look at it steadily the same as if you had a blackened glass at the eye. A roaring sound now catches the ear, louder and louder, until, as the smoke obscures all else to the sight, so does the roar of the fire deaden all other sounds. There was a thin belt of jungle left between the two estates. The belt was full of dead decayed wood, and standing up in it tall dried-up stumps, the remains of what had once been trees. They were trees still, but dead and quite dried into tinder by the late scorching weather. A little green brushwood was growing underneath, which only served to conceal a mass of dry rotten sticks lying thick on the ground. The running fire came up to the belt, which checked it a little, but only apparently to gather fresh strength. A strong gust of wind and the fire is into the belt, and soon the whole mass of decayed rubbish is in a red glow. It soon began to lick up the dry stumps, it caught hold of them and wound round them up to their very tops like some huge corkscrew of fire. From these blazing trees, sparks of fire were carried by the wind far into Mr. Brown's coffee, and the first intimation he had of his unpleasant fact was seeing a small white column of smoke up amongst the coffee trees. Those who have never seen or read of a coffee estate may ask, "How can green trees burn?" For many years after the formation of an estate, the ground is covered with timber in process of decay, logs, stumps, roots, and large masses of rotten wood reduced to touchwood, that had perhaps been lying there for years before the forest was felled. Into these masses of rotten timber a small spark had been carried by the wind, where, having found a suitable bed, it was fanned by the wind into a red-hot glow, until the whole tree became a mass of fire. All the coffee trees next or near the influence of this glowing mass of course became speedily scorched and dried up. So speedily did they dry up, that their leaves and twigs became the means of continuing the run of fire until it came upon another dry tree, where the same occurrence was repeated, and so spread on.

TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING.

"The coffee is on fire!" shouts Mr. Brown, but what can he or any man do? They are all nearly choked and blinded with smoke. They cannot even see where the fire is, or rather fires, for they seem spreading in every direction. His bungalow and lines, both thatched with grass, are not far off. What if a spark should fall upon them! A dozen coolies are ordered up to sit on the ridge-pole of the bungalow with buckets of water, and green branches of trees, and the same on the top of the lines. Mr. Brown, with a wet silk handkerchief fastened over his face, is seen here and there and everywhere, gliding about amongst the smoke. Wherever a spark falls, coolies with mamoties (large hoes) dig down into the ground for damp earth which they heap on the top of the incipient fire. But all along the belt, the coffee is on fire, no doubt about that, and it is spreading, and gaining strength and force. Great present sacrifices have sometimes to be made in order to gain or obtain any important final result. This axiom passed through Mr. Brown's mind, and such are the vagaries and flights of the mind even under very grave and important events, that he actually remembered how he had paid Mr. Solomons' account by selling his gun!

He sends down to the store for two dozen good sharp billhooks. Twenty-four men, each with a billhook, and not an inch of cloth of any sort about their bodies, literally naked to the skin, are ordered to stand by and cut a line through the coffee trees, thirty or forty feet broad. This is done, and the cut trees carried away. Brooms are now made of the branches of the coffee trees, tied tight together. This line is swept clear and clean of all leaves and dry wood, as clean as a pavement. Not a bit too soon. On comes the fire in the coffee, greedily sucking up and catching everything combustible; slowly but surely scorching every coffee tree that it passes by. It reaches the line cut through the coffee: it has no more fuel or food. Gradually it dies out, or at all events is now easily put out, but the whole atmosphere is a dense mass of smoke, hanging here and there and everywhere; nothing can be seen, so that some idea can be had of the amount of damage done.

There can, however, be no manner of doubt but that Mr. Wildgoose has had a good burn, and that Mr. Brown has been well burnt. He judged it necessary to advise Messrs. A. B. C. & Co., of what had happened, who duly informed him to appoint some disinterested party to assess the damage done, and report the same to themselves. And as, even in the jungles of Ceylon, disinterested parties are always easily to be found where there is a fee to be attached to their disinterested opinion, this was not a difficult

THATCHED ROOFS.

duty for him to perform. The "disinterested party" duly arrived, looked carefully over the place, made a good many jottings in his pocket-book, asked Mr. Brown a few casual unimportant questions, just as if it was necessary for him to say something, took tiffin, smoked in the verandah, and went away, but Mr. Brown never heard what was settled. Even Wildgoose would not tell, and always shuffled the subject. Of course this behaviour just tended to make Mr. Brown and his friends the more curious to know. Messrs. A. B. C. & Co. ordered him to render an account to Mr. Wildgoose of the cost of coolies employed in checking the fire. A straw shews which way the wind blows. Mr. Brown came to the conclusion that Mr. Wildgoose was going to pay the value of damages assessed by the "disinterested party" and the cost of his coolies in putting out the fire, but he never ventured to ask Wildgoose, who was a very close fellow about money matters, and nothing would annoy him more than to ask him. In fact he would not tell; it was no use asking him.

A day or two after the fire, there came on a good shower of rain. It has often been noticed that it very often rains not long after a big fire. (Can there be any atmospheric disturbance which induces or draws rain on? * Whether there is or not, the rain caused a disturbance inside the bungalow and cooly lines. The people who had been on the roof to prevent danger from fire had made holes in the thatch, their feet and legs going through the dry crisp grass. Through these holes the wet ran down, and it was evident the whole of the buildings would have to be re-thatched. Nothing injures a thatched roof more than any one walking on it: it is almost impossible to make it watertight again, especially if the thatch is of any age, and any of it partially rotten; even if rotten underneath, it will last a long time if not disturbed, but if it is once broken up, however, slightly, the more you try to patch it up the more it becomes damaged, because the action of the feet of those who try to repair it merely increases the damage.

* The heat of a great fire produces a vacuum, which the air from every quarter rushes in to fill up. Hence the friction gives birth to electricity, which probably acts on moisture clouds, causing their particles to coalesce and be deposited as rain. We well remember the cannon firing of a sham battle on the Galle Face bringing on a tremendous downpour of rain, whilst it was notorious, during the Austro-Prussian and Franco-German wars, that battles in which artillery was much employed were followed by "heavy wet."—ED.

NEIGHBOURS.

Mr. Wildgoose gave a "great spread" on the evening of the fire. Of course Mr. Brown was invited, but he declined, on the plea of being quite "done up" with the day's exertions, but actually he had not forgotten the after results of the last spree, and had no wish to incur or run to the risk of incurring them again. In replying to the invitation, he jocularly remarked that "Wildgoose was a cool fellow, after setting fire to his coffee, and nearly burning him out of his bungalow, on the very same day to invite him to dinner." When Mr. Wildgoose received this note, he and some of his friends had just returned from the fire. Of course they were tired and thirsty, so they finished off some bottles of champagne, which seemed to rouse his wit, which indeed was always ready for a spark. So in reply he wrote Mr. Brown, that he was not done with him yet. He had only been partially successful in burning him out, but he was going to persevere, so he would be over immediately and now do his best in trying to smoke him out! He would bring no tobacco with him, so if he had not a good supply he would smoke him dry, and if he was smoked *dry* it would not require much pressing to come back with him and get wet with two bottles of champagne which had been stowed away in a hide, on purpose for his special use. Mr. Brown laughed; his neighbour *was* "such a fellow," but, although his name was Brown, there was not much "green" in it. Two bottles of champagne were nothing between two strong young fellows, but what would it lead to? His friend would not let him off with this, there would be plenty more of "other stuff" on the sideboard. Mr. Brown knew his friend better than his friend knew him. Mr. Brown was a Scotchman, and Mr. Wildgoose was English, but perhaps many of our readers could catch this fact, without being told of it.

It was a long time before it was safe to walk in the newly burnt-off clearing, because, although it had generally died out, yet in certain places hidden embers were still glowing, and the passer-by might suddenly pat his foot into a hot mass of ashes, which, if it did nothing worse, at all events spoilt his shoes. But, after a time, when work might be with safety commenced. The first job Mr. Wildgoose did, was to trace and cut a road, on the shortest route and easiest gradient up to the boundary of the "Peela Tottam" coffee. Of course Mr. Brown could not do less than connect this road with one of his own, so that his neighbour could mount his pony at his own bungalow and gallop over to Brown's in less than half-an-hour.

When Mr. Wildgoose felt dull and lonely, he would now never invite his neighbours, as the invitation was

GREAT AND LITTLE "SPREADS."

more frequently rejected than accepted. He would order his horsekeeper to saddle the pony, take it over to the Peela Tottam and bring the "durai." He rarely even wrote a slip of paper, but just sent a verbal message, "Master's salaams. Come over and dine." Brown was completely caught in this trap, he was a good-hearted fellow, and could not hurt any one's feelings. He might easily have put a stop to this, by sending the pony back, with "Master's salaams. Not coming," but he didn't, he always went. It did not do him any harm, however, but a great deal of good, as there never was any *spread* or *spree* at these unceremonious requests for a visit. It was just "Beef steaks, curry and rice, and a glass of beer," and while at this plain dinner, Wildgoose often said he enjoyed himself more, and had greater satisfaction, both present and after, than at any of his great dinners. His friend said, "Give them up. Why do you give them?" "Ay," says he, "there's the rub. I cannot answer your question, for when I ask myself, I cannot tell. The fit just comes on me sometimes to give a flare up. You know it is thought to be 'the thing'; it is considered necessary for one in my position, and with my means to it sometimes. Otherwise my friends would say he's a scrubby fellow, he turned a 'screw,' "No, no," says Brown, "your friends would not say that; they would say you have turned a steady sensible fellow. At least I would say so, and so also would Jones. By the bye let's go over and see Jones. It is a great shame we so seldom visit him, but you know he is always out at his work, and considers visitors rather a bore." So away they went to visit Jones, who was, of course, out at his work. During the time they had sent for him, the bungalow was inspected. It was in the usual style, only clean and neat. Everything was coarse and rough, but neatly set in its proper place. When Jones came in, he asked them to spend the afternoon and dine, which they did. There was no shooting at old doors, but they walked down to the store, and had a turn about the coffee. When dinner was served, it was ample for three, a good dish of beef steak, sweet potatoes, curry and rice and glass of brandy and water, two or three if the guests chose, but Mr. Jones himself never took more than one. So of course his guests didn't either. Mr. Jones never gave any great dinners, in fact he never even asked any one to dine with him. His idea was, that if you formally asked your friends to dinner, you must provide something better and more expensive than usual, but if a neighbour popped in, of course he came to see you, and get "pot luck," he did not come to *dinner*. The evening was spent in social con-

SPENDING MONEY.

versation on various subjects, and the two departed at nine o'clock, well pleased with the pleasant evening they had spent. Wildgoose acknowledged he had enjoyed himself far more than at any of his heavy spreads "but then you know poor Jones can't afford that sort of thing." Mr. Brown was fully of opinion, that, even if he could afford it, he would not give them, "but you know, Wildgoose, it is impossible to convince you on these subjects, or if you are convinced,

"A man convinced against his will,
Is of the same opinion still."

Mr. Brown had remarked that his neighbour Wildgoose had not "been himself" for a long time; he was silent and thoughtful, and seemed all of a sudden to have given up all "nonsense" and "gadding about"; he was always busy with papers and accounts: in fact, was quite absorbed in business. It all became explained, after it could hardly be concealed any longer, when on meeting him one day, he said:—"Brown, I am going to leave you. I am going home, and am not sure if I shall ever come back again. Coffee planting does not suit me; it is too slow and plodding a life. In fact, it does not nearly come up to what I expected, unless in the spending of money: in this respect it certainly has far exceeded my expectations, and the worst of it is that I have nothing to shew for thousands I have spent on this wretched place. Really, I don't know where the money has gone to. Will you believe it now, here is somewhere about from 100 to 130 acres of coffee, and it has cost me in all, or rather the 'governor,' close upon £10,000?"

Mr. Brown asked the very natural question, if he had kept a separate and distinct account of his own personal and private expenditure apart altogether from estate expenditure, but he had not. "Why," says he, "the money is spent. I have been living on the estate, so it's all one," and he made an attempt at a smile and a joke. "The money has been spent upon the estate, and they tell me," says Wildgoose, very sorrowfully, "that the estate is not worth it. Nobody will give that price, and that the place must just be carried on under agents, in the most economical manner, in order that it may yield the 'governor' a fair interest for his *tin*. Upon my word, how I am ever to face him I know not; for it was not so very long ago I wrote him, to make his mind quite easy, for I was sure to be home in a couple of years with an income of £2,000 per annum. And the worst of it all is, that I fear the money he has given and sent me is all borrowed, or at all events a great portion of it. Oh dear, what is to be done!"

A CHANGE OF SUPERINTENDENTS.

Brown suddenly fired up, "Done!" says he, "don't be done. What's the use of going home? It's never too late to mend; turn over a new leaf. A strong young fellow like you to be so chicken-hearted! Give up all this stuff. Don't ask any of your relations for a penny; don't go home. Look out for a superintendent's berth, and set to work like me and Jones, and then mind, if the estate is economically managed, the debt will always be decreasing and of course the interest. Take a more hopeful view of matters. Never give in. My advice to you is: Go down to Colombo, with a plain written statement of your affairs, and perhaps you will find some agency house who will not consider them altogether hopeless. Who knows but some of them might take up or take over your account?"

But Wildgoose shook his head mournfully; he packed up a couple of trunks, left all his things in the bungalow, as if he was to be back very soon. He went down to Colombo, and the first and last his friends heard of him was his name in the shipping list, as a passenger to London round the Cape.

Shortly after this event, a stranger arrived at the bungalow recently occupied by Mr. Wildgoose. He seemed to be under strict and stringent orders, but all debts and accounts were duly paid. The stranger neither gave nor went to dinners, and seemed to devote his whole attention to the estate, but, it had been so long neglected and mismanaged, or rather not managed at all, that what the stranger was doing or what he had done was never noticed, or rather was not perceptible. At last it was no longer concealed that the estate was a very fine property, with a prospect of becoming finer. It survived all the crashes and smashes of 1847-48. Somebody was making or going to make a good thing of it—who that somebody was nobody knew, but it was perfectly well-known neither Mr. Wildgoose nor his governor had any interest in it; their names were mentioned no more. There were no Ceylon Directories in these days, so the curious could not turn up a page to see who was proprietor. It was the case with many estates: no one knew who the proprietors were, or if they thought they knew they were wrong. Many gave themselves out to be proprietors, lived on the estates, seemed to command any amount of money, and to possess full power in every respect, and yet they were not proprietors, only paid managers or agents of some one in the other countries. The deception was never found out, or even suspected, until the up-country managers or agents suddenly disappeared, and others took their place. Even then it was not perhaps sus-

pected; for those who took their place to be considered agents of their predecessors who had disappeared, "gone home with a fortune." Fortune indeed!!

Mr. Jones now commenced to have long conversations with Mr. Brown on the prospects of superintendents. He did not believe there were any beyond ten, twelve, or fifteen pounds a month, and what were they to do, if they lost their health or got old in harness? They could not save, and unless they had any prospects of money from their relations could never become proprietors, and, even if they could, what was the use? Whoever made money by coffee planting? Did they not see that all those with capital who invested, instead of making, lost. The whole affair was a humbug and delusion. He was determined to cut it and go to Australia. Would Brown come with him? But Brown said: "No, I have faith in coffee, if people would only do it justice." He then stepped a little way out from the bungalow, and shewed Jones half-a-dozen of trees, and asked him what he thought of them.

"Well," says Jones, "they must have at least at the rate of ten or twelve cwts per acre on them, and if you only could get all the estate like that, it would be a fortune."

Brown said:—"The whole estate *could* be made *like that*, if it was properly cultivated. With my own hands I have regularly pruned, handled and manured these trees as an experiment, and you see the result. Depend upon it, the day will come when proprietors and agents will come to my ideas as correct, and the system of high cultivation will become a science; educated and intelligent men will be sought after as managers, and salaries will be given on an average of from £300 to £500 per annum. Coffee estates will become good permanent investments, and proprietors, instead of making haste to be rich, in such haste that they always remain poor, will not sell their estates, but look upon them as the best investment for money. The superintendents will share in the prosperity. They will have good bungalows, plank floors, and even glass windows! They will." But Jones stopped him. "A truce to all this nonsense. I don't believe a word of it—coffee planting is on its last legs, it's a failure. I'm off to Australia." He held Brown with the right hand, with the left he pointed to the "Peacock Hill" and the "Sentry Box." "You see those two hills: they may meet: some convulsion of nature may throw them together, but *we* will never meet again. Good bye, old fellow."

He sailed from Colombo to Port Philip in the *Torrington*, along with a number of others, and was neither seen nor heard of any more by his former associate in Ceylon.

CHAPTER XII.

ESTATE ACCOUNTS, AND HOW TO PREPARE THEM WITH GREATEST ACCURACY AND LEAST TROUBLE:— THE ROYAL ROAD TO WELL-KEPT WEEKLY AND MONTHLY REPORTS.

Mr. Brown was now left alone; his new neighbours were not "his sort of people," he had no "community of sentiment" with them. He did not associate with them, nor did they make any friendly advances towards him. The reserve was mutual. The position and prospects of coffee became worse and worse. He was afraid to send in his accounts. They were always found fault with, as being extravagant in the extreme, and the idea of asking for money was only an idea, because it was useless putting it in practice. He had tried it, had at first received a reply that his requisition would be attended to shortly, but it was not. Latterly he got no reply at all. After a time several strange gentlemen would pay him a visit, walk over the estate, go away, and say nothing. At last one visitor did enter into conversation. He told him the estate was for sale, and he had come to inspect it, with a view to purchase. He knew nothing about coffee planting, and so would be glad of his opinion as to what the capabilities of the estate were, if it was properly worked, and a fair amount of money expended upon it. Mr. Brown shewed him the trees about which he and Jones had their last conversation, and said:—"The climate and soil are both good and suitable for coffee, and I have no doubt the whole estate could be made something like this, were it properly cultivated. It is merely a question of money in bringing the coffee trees into this state, but I can say nothing as to whether or not it will pay the proprietor. Of course I know nothing about the present state and future prospects of the London markets. All I can say is, if you, or any one, will agree to spend so much money, I can almost guarantee you a certain amount of crop." After a long conversation the visitor noted down all Brown's calculations, gave him his address, told him his name was Sharp, and that he would probably both see and hear from him before very long. But instead of seeing or hearing from him Mr. Brown heard about him, as the following letter he received from Messrs. A. B. C. & Co. will explain:—

"Andrew Brown, Esq., Peela Tottam.

"DEAR SIR,—We beg to advise you that John Sharp, Esq., has become the purchaser of the Peela Tottam coffee estate. As he takes over the property on the

A NEW PROPRIETOR.

first proximo, you will be so good as to have all your accounts balanced up to that date, and sent in, in order for their immediate settlement. You will also forward a list of all the movable property, such as tools, furniture, pulpers, bags, mats, &c., as all such are to be taken over by Mr. Sharp, at a valuation.

"We may further add, that yourself and all coolies and work-people of any description on the estate are under orders from, and responsible to, Mr. Sharp, who in his turn undertakes all responsibilities incurred, pecuniary and otherwise, subsequent to the first proximo.

"With all good wishes, we take leave of you, and are,

"Yours truly,

"A. B. C. & Co."

After this letter Mr. Brown had a busy time of it. He might be seen here, there, and everywhere, with note-book in hand, taking inventories, until at last all was completed, and the inventory sent in. When Mr. Sharp again arrived, everything was in order, in so far as Mr. Brown's instructions went, and so his visit was merely a formal one, intimating formally that he was in possession. He had no sort of reserved secrecy about him, but frankly told Brown he was afraid he had paid rather a high figure. He referred to his note-book, and said :—"There are about 200 acres in coffee, or rather in weeds, and 300 acres of forest, all of which is very suitable for coffee, indeed much more so than what is at present in cultivation, or rather in an uncultivated abandoned state. The tools, buildings, machinery, &c., are all out of order, in fact, done for, nothing but a lot of rubbish, and for all this I have paid down in hard cash, on the last day of the month, £1,500. Now, Mr. Brown, what do you think of my prospects? I put myself in your hands for advice, of course reserving to myself the option of taking it or not."

This was a good beginning, with plain speaking, for all who ask advice make this secret reservation : they insist upon having your advice, and never take it, unless it agrees with their own opinion. Mr. Brown's advice was this :—"The very first thing is to get down the weeds, and keep them down. We will take on a large force of coolies and roughly go over the whole estate. This will ease the coffee, and save it from being choked, at least such of it as is not already gone. But you will be surprised at the vitality and vigor of the coffee tree ; so long as the stem and primary branches are not dead, no fear but the tree will come round. After this, give the trees a rough touch with the knife and saw, where such is needed, such as double stems, double tops, or excessive height. Then take 30 to 50 acres, as much as we think can be managed

INCREASE OF SALARY.

specially, but if the whole estate can be managed so much the better. But we have not the coolies. Take 50 acres, keep constantly weeding it, say once every three or four weeks, never allow the weeds to get over three or four inches high. Stick to that rule, and we will soon get them under. In the meantime never mind the buildings, they will be patched up, till we see how the coffee comes round. After that takes place, we will be better able to judge what will be the requirements of the place."

Mr. Sharp was satisfied with this advice, and told Mr. Brown to "go ahead," that Y. Z. & Co. in Colombo were his agents, he would find they would always promptly meet all his requisitions. As for himself, he was off to Bombay, and would probably be back in three or four months, when he would visit and make up his mind finally as to what was to be done. "But," says he, "by the bye, what is your own salary?" "Twelve pounds ten shillings per month," says Brown. Mr. Sharp looked very grave, almost sad, and Mr. Brown thought he considered it too much, and it was "all up" with him, but Mr. Sharp at last said:—"For the work before you, if you do it thoroughly, as I believe you will, this salary is too small. Put yourself down for £200 per annum, that is monthly pay at that rate, and it will remain an open question, subject to the state of the work and prospects of recovering the coffee, whether or not, when I next see the place, you will not receive a further advance. I am quite convinced that one of the great present obstacles to the planting interest is the low rate of pay to superintendents. They take no interest in their situations: Make a man's place worth keeping and taking care of, and he will naturally endeavour to make his own services worth your retaining. I merely briefly give you my views on this matter. If you attend to my interest, you will find it is your own interest to do so, and that, while attending to my interest, you are also doing so to your own? But although I am liberal I will have no money wasted, nothing is to be done for show or brag. I hear some managers boast of the sums of money spent, without any reference as to how it is spent. Beware of this. Rather boast of your economy, and of the comparative cheapness any work has cost, as set against the original estimate."

Mr. Brown asked, "What is the meaning of original estimate?"

Mr. Sharp looked hard at him and put both his hands into his pockets, where he kept them in motion as if he was trying to find some coin, but could n't. "Do you mean to tell me," said he, "that you—you entrusted with the charge of a very import-

NEW REGULATIONS:

ant property, with the control of an expenditure of thousands per annum, make no calculations of what this expenditure is to be, or give no advice to your employers, in anticipation of your pecuniary requirements. How do you get your money?"

Mr. Brown replied, that, when he wanted money, he used to write to Messrs. A. B. C. & Co., say for £100: sometimes he got it, sometimes less than he asked for; and occasionally, but these occasions were rare, more. Whatever the sum was, he just acknowledged receipt of it by letter and entered the same in his cash-book. This was all.

"A very loose system, a very loose way of doing business," says Mr. Sharp. "There is to be no more of this sort of thing. Let me see your account form."

So Mr. Sharp explained all about the account current: how there must either be a balance due, or balance on hand; if the former, he would receive it, if the latter, and he required more, he would get what he wanted, but, unless on an urgent occasion, no money was to be paid, unless a regular system of monthly accounts was entered upon and rendered.

Mr. Brown did not seem satisfied with this new regulation. He explained to Mr. Sharp that he had so much to attend to on the estate, that he had no time for this perpetual working away at accounts.

"No time!" says Mr. Sharp. "Absurd. Why, what do you do during your hour after breakfast, and during your solitary evenings? I'll tell you what you do. You lie down on the couch, or walk up and down the verandah, stupifying your brain with tobacco smoking. Now, rest is needful, but rest does not always consist in doing nothing. A very wholesome process of rest is change of occupation, and your accounts furnish you with this change. Don't pore over them, but take half an hour or an hour occasionally, and you will find you will be astonished how easily they are got through. You, I suppose, enter, or will enter, your distribution of labour in your journal every night. Well, before closing your book, take your printed form of monthly account, and enter it there also, or make a rule to copy and enter it weekly. Thus, when the month is done, instead of having a formidable array of figures to copy out, it is all done, and you have nothing to do but work up, and fill in the analysis. The same way with the check-roll: as you have half-an-hour's spare time, fill in the rates of pay, enter the rice issues weekly, and also the number of days the coolies have worked. Take the week's work, and in the Sunday column, if the man has worked four or five days during the week, mark the number in pencil,

ORDER AND METHOD:

say five, four, six, five : the number of days is thus at once reckoned, twenty, instead of going over the whole line of thirty days. Many superintendents consider the making out of their accounts the most disagreeable and unpleasant work they have got, simply because they put off every sort of work in the way of figures to the very last, until they are obliged to be at them, and thus find themselves compelled to undergo a heavy accumulation of arrears of work, and then they blame the accounts, those awful accounts. It would just be the same way with any other of their works, were they to defer them, and put them off till the very last moment. I met with a smart man on my way up, who never had any difficulty about loading his coffee carts, and he told me the secret. Whenever he had advice of a batch of carts being forwarded to load coffee, he took a note of the time when they were due. Long before this time, he had his bags all arranged, coffee measured, and a great portion of it despatched, and temporarily stored in a respectable man's shed, who, for the consideration of one penny per bushel, took charge of, and was responsible for, the coffee, until the carts arrived. When they did, the coffee was loaded and despatched at once, and, had it not been for this little tact, management, and foresight, the carts would probably have been waiting ten days or a fortnight, and even then the coolies utterly exhausted with crop transport day after day. And so it is with everything else, tact and management carry the day. Hard work : your hard-working man, who never uses his head, that is to say if he has any to use, gives himself a very great deal of unnecessary hard work, and is always in trouble and difficulty about something. Good bye, Mr. Brown, good bye, and recollect order must be attended to, and I know perfectly well, on my next visit, you will be quite of my opinion, and we will hear nothing more of no time for accounts. But there are exceptions to every rule : if you should happen to get an overflowing bumper of a crop and have to work night and day, pulping and washing, we will excuse you then. We are not unreasonable. There are exceptions to every rule. My remarks only apply to the usual routine of life. You will find no difficulty in getting money during crop season, on requisition, or on the statement that you are so busy with crop operations, that indulgence is requested in the matter of accounts not being forwarded with the usual punctuality."

The day after Mr. Sharp's departure Mr. Brown commenced to make out all his arrears of accounts. It took him no small time, trouble, and difficulty, but

THE NEW SYSTEM.

time, patient perseverance, and determination, overcame, as they generally do overcome, all obstacles. All arrears were sent in. The new system was commenced exactly as Mr. Sharp had suggested, which he found entailed no trouble at all, and he actually began to laugh at some of his neighbours, who were always sighing over their figures. He advised them to do as he did, but they would not. There was always something to prevent them, or, if not, was it not time enough to undertake an arduous and disagreeable duty, when that duty became necessary. In fact, promptitude and exactness in accounts rests with employers: when they find their men lax, or deficient, a distinct order must be issued.

For there are some, it is to be feared many, who seem incapable of accepting, or understanding, the axiom, "Drive your business, don't let it drive you," and there are some who neither drive nor are driven. Their business seems a clog or drag, which always hangs about them; the wheels go slowly round, stopping occasionally, creaking, until a great crack and smash comes, when they open their eyes in astonishment as to how it has all happened: everything and everybody is to blame, except themselves. "They are victims of untoward and adverse circumstances." Few seem to be aware that in many instances man makes the circumstances, and not, as is more frequently supposed, circumstances the man. Of course there are exceptions, for it cannot be denied, that often the force of circumstances draw out one's abilities and capabilities, where, if it had not been for such an occurrence, they would ever have remained dead or dormant, even the very possessor of considerable talent and ability remaining in ignorance of his own powers. Hence the uses of adversity, about which a whole essay might be written. But we must confine ourselves to the subject, and briefly remark, that, in all probability, crisis and misfortunes, which have periodically broken out in the planting interest, have had their uses: very probably to us of the present day, they were, or have proved to be, quite the reverse of misfortunes. They were, and are still, like beacons on the rocks, pointing out to the sometimes puzzled mariner the dangers to be avoided, although it is to be feared that even still some are too foolhardy, and sail too near the rocks.

However, it is often very tempting to shorten the voyage to the harbour of independence. A few with bold hearts, steady heads, or most probably by what they would say in Scotland "more by luck than gude guiding," achieve it; others, urged on by their example, fail, and make a smash of it. But in the

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER.

end, probably for all, the long tedious route is the surest, certainly the safest. Some, without being utterly shipwrecked, have had eventually to turn back, and take to the open sea, where, if one wind did not suit them, they could make it in a manner suitable by tacking about, until they got into the "trade winds." The coffee enterprise now is like a ship in the trade winds. Long may the planter be like the grateful sea captain, stand by the helm, with sails all set, scudding freely and pleasantly along. Don't fall asleep however over continued prosperity. Look out for squalls, they are never far off, and a little skilful steering will keep you all right.

Mr. Brown gained considerable knowledge and experience by punctually making out his monthly accounts. He made notes of why the weeding had cost more, or less, this month than it did in the preceding one. It is astonishing when one comes narrowly to examine the "why and wherefore," how knowledge is extended and increased. "Knowledge is power." Knowledge and power are greater than money, because if used aright, they can generally command it, and what is far better they certainly command the suitable or wise employment or disbursement of it.

Knowledge, without pecuniary ability to back it up, is a hardly desirable state to be in. It makes one restless and unhappy. Any intelligent superintendent can testify to this. Has he ever been in a position where, on a coffee estate, he knew what should and ought to be done, where he was positively sure certain remunerative results would follow certain pecuniary outlay, of what avail is his knowledge, if he is stinted and restricted to the lowest possible figure of expenditure? It is positively injurious to his own character, in the estimation of those who do not see inside the machinery. They are apt to exclaim, "How can this man be what he is said to be? Why does he not do this work? Why has he left undone that?" The whole is comprehended in a few words—restricted, or rather stinted, expenditure? "Knowledge is power." Read the annals of many a bygone age, and note how powerless some of our most scientific men have been, for want of pecuniary means to carry their knowledge into practice. In order that knowledge may actually become power, it must to a certain extent be backed up by money. And in order that money be wisely used, it must, to a certain extent, be protected and extended by knowledge. Again, money without knowledge is far worse than knowledge without money: in the latter case knowledge will probably acquire money; in the former, even if money is gained, it will probably soon again be lost, unless it is locked up to rust, serving only as a burdensome care to

A SCARCITY OF SALT.

possessor, and creating or enlarging no useful or beneficent purposes to the world at large. These were the reflections of Mr. Brown. He did not trouble his mind at all now, about a "rise of screw": he knew this would in due course follow an increase of practical knowledge. He frankly and freely told his employers, he expected to receive no advance of pay until they could conscientiously say he deserved it. What he desired, and urged on their allowing, was a liberal amount of cash to be spent upon the estate. Mr. Brown soon got the estate into very fine order. His neighbours began to say, "It was an easy thing to be a good planter, on a good estate." "It was an easy thing to have everything in first rate order, when money was always forthcoming." "He was in luck in having such easy liberal employers. If they could only get a place like this, wouldn't they shine too." There was a good deal of truth in all this talk, because there can be no manner of doubt, but the genius of many a good planter is buried or nipped in the bud, from want of opportunities to draw it out and develope it. It is the same in every calling. But look on the other side. How many opportunities have some men had, who have proved themselves incompetent and incapable for the position, and who from their temporary elevation have sunk even lower than they were before, never to rise again.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE UNEASINESS PRECEDING THE RISING OF 1848:

It is not thirty years ago, but soon will be, when, in July, 1848, a general feeling of uneasiness and insecurity began to pervade not only the planting but the entire European population. It was quite evident that the native population were in a sullen discontent. The cause of this was said to be the imposition of a dog tax, by the then Governor, Lord Torrington. Tumultuous meetings were held at Borella, which necessitated the calling out of the military; the ill-feeling spread up-country, and its chief centre was the district of Matale. A military gentleman of some old experience in Ceylon, in riding through the Matale bazar, remarked to his friend, "Something is going to happen, there will be an out-break amongst the Sinhalese soon." His friend asked him why he thought so, "as everything seemed perfectly quiet." "Just note the bazar state," says he, "and observe the scarcity of salt, and, where there is any, how eagerly it is all bought up."

PREPARING FOR REBELLION.

"Well," says the friend, "I see it is so, but what has a scarcity of salt to do with encouraging your idea of a rising taking place amongst the natives?" "It has everything to do with it," says the military gentleman: "they are taking a lesson from past experience, for, during the last insurrection, there can be no manner of doubt, the Kandyan were in a great measure brought up, from want of salt. As this necessary of life is wholly transmitted up-country, from the sea-coast towns, of course it was not a very difficult matter to stop the general supply. They have taken a lesson out of the leaf of the past: they are purchasing and storing up salt." On arriving at the resthouse, the horsekeeper was sent out to the bazar to purchase a measure of salt. He was away a very long time, and at last came back without it, saying that such a thing was not to be had in all the bazars! "It is plain enough now," says the military gentleman, "there must be no time lost in informing Government of this state of matters." Another premonitory sign of the time was that the planters in different districts found it impossible to purchase paddy (rice in husk) for their horses. There was no paddy anywhere, at least money could not buy it. The reason of this was, that, in anticipation of a general insurrection, the villagers had stored away and concealed all their spare paddy, meant, of course, as food for themselves, during a period of emergency, for, as is well-known at the present day, the villagers pound up their own paddy into rice, for their own consumption. Not only this, but a large quantity is kept in store for seed, in case of the failure or shortcoming of any year's crop: in fact, a reserve seed supply. Thus, with a good stock of paddy and salt in their mountain homes, they could bid defiance to any attempt to reduce them by calling off food supplies from the low-country. A good stock of paddy and salt to them was similar to laying in a large supply of provisions in a town or fort, which the inhabitants expected was to be laid under a siege or blockade. Large numbers of villagers commenced to flock into Kandy, on various pretences, and it was quite evident that something unusual was in contemplation; a number of planters, who were in town on private business were detained there by the Government to help, if need be in preserving the public security. Sentry guard was kept at the bank and public offices. The military force in the Island being totally inadequate to meet an emergency like this; telegrams were sent to Madras for military reinforcements to be forwarded, without delay, from

MARTIAL LAW.

that Presidency. At last the report came, that the rioters had "taken the field," near the town of Matale, that they had actually got hold of some, pretended or otherwise, scion of the late royal family, and proclaimed him king.

Martial law was now proclaimed, and detachments of European and Malay troops were marched out from Kandy to Matale, a distance of sixteen miles, to meet the enemy. It was only on the north side of Kandy that any public outbreak took place. However, there can be no manner of doubt at all that, to the south, the villagers were biding their time, and, if any measure of success had attended the rising in the north, they would not have been slow in following it up. The writer had occasion to send some coolies down to the village of Kotmale, or rather district, for a few bushels of paddy. The coolies returned without any, and reported that there seemed no coolies there but women and children. Where were the men, or what were they doing? Probably holding some meeting in some of the glens deliberating what course to adopt. It was quite possible we might be all massacred during the night, for, if the solitary secluded life of the planter is considered, it is perfectly evident that, if there had been any well-laid preconceived plans at a given hour or given night, not a white man would have been left to tell the tale. The Tamil coolies dislike the Sinhalese. We were quite safe in trusting them, and so at many a bungalow a dozen or so of coolies kept watch in the verandah during the night. Lieutenant W., with a detachment of military, was stationed at the Pussellawa bazar, but there never was any necessity for their services, for, on the 29th of July 1848, the detachment of troops sent out from Kandy came upon the rebels at Wariyapola near Matale. They were merely a mass, a mob, with not the slightest pretension to military discipline, display, or armament; the bulk were armed with old flint guns, rude spears, knives; and probably hooks and scythes. The only source of danger was in their numbers; but even that, without a trained military leader, was of very little use. The military gentleman who had noticed the want of salt was in command of the troops, and lost no time in charging the enemy, he himself leading them on pistol in hand. Before a mere handful of disciplined troops, the masses gave way, and the object now was, not to disperse the enemy, but to prevent a general massacre. The blood of the Malay soldiers being up, report said there was some "sticking" in cold blood. The king was, ere long, captured

THE RISING SUPPRESSED.

and the rising was at an end before it was well begun. The amount of killed and wounded was very small. A proclamation was issued that all who returned to their homes and resumed their peaceable occupations would not be interfered with, and this proclamation was accepted and acted upon. Then all the villagers on the south side of Kandy congratulated themselves on and paraded their loyalty (?)! Would it have been so, had the engagement at Matale resulted differently? A story may be told in connection with this rioting, which will serve to show the character and disposition of the rebels. A party of planters were assembled at a bungalow in one of the disturbed districts. Of course, their guns were all loaded and ready for action, when a party of rebels was observed marching upon the bungalow. It, however, soon became apparent, that the direct object of attack was not the bungalow, but the fowl-house; having successfully accomplished the assault on this building, they speedily dispersed laden with the plunder. One fellow running away full-speed holding a goose by the neck was an irresistible temptation for a rifle shot, so crack went a rifle, the ball had lodged in one of the marauder's "two soft cushions"; he dropped the goose, applied both hands to the *cushions*, and ran the faster! The goose, released from its perilous situation, of course must behave like a goose. It raised its wings, flapped them, screamed, and occasionally looked around, slowly making for the bungalow, seemingly perfectly ignorant of the narrow escape it had made from being converted into a Sinhalese curry. The goose evidently considered it had achieved some great victory, not that it had been rescued by some unknown friendly power. Pity it is that there should be so many geese in this world of the same way of thinking.

Some philanthropists (?) now began to talk about the rebellion. This sort of people always do turn up and create disturbances. It became more than talk, for it was taken notice of in Parliament, and, I am not certain, but think, that, on account of his action in this matter, Lord Torrington was recalled, and was examined in Parliament House, where the course of action he had adopted was entirely disapproved of. But all those who know anything of the Sinhalese character will agree with me, not only in exonerating his lordship from all blame, but in stating our conviction that any milder policy would merely have tended to strengthen the rioters and extend the riots. If they had met with any, even partial, success

SCARCITY OF LABOUR.

at first,* there is no saying what amount of bloodshed would have been required to quell it. The prompt and decisive action taken by his lordship was the wisest and most humane that could have been adopted, and it was only to be regretted that the home authorities took a different view of the subject, but they forgot or were perhaps ignorant of the traits of native character. Leniency would have been considered false. Want of prompt and decisive action would have been put down as inability to act. No doubt, even to this day, many will hold a different opinion. Well, we will not open up the subject after a lapse of twenty-seven years: let them keep their own opinion, and I will keep mine, and drop the subject, with the remark that a personal residence in a country where it is considered by the authorities advisable to proclaim martial law is a very different matter, and gives one very different views of the general state of affairs from what would probably be thought by one sitting at home at ease, with life and property so safe, that even the policeman on his stated rounds finds his office almost a sinecure. It is wonderful what a little practical experience will sometimes do, and how it opens one's eyes to the necessity or otherwise of certain courses of action, I said then, and I say now, Lord Torrington's policy was right.†

But, although the rising was put an end to in a very short time, the after results of it were felt for some time. Of course the news reached the Indian coast, with very considerable exaggerations. The planters began to be apprehensive of a scarcity of labour, as coolies did not come in. They were fearful, and very naturally so, as the route from the coast to the coffee districts ran direct through the principal disturbed districts, crop was coming on, so many estates despatched emissaries to the coast, to make known that all was quiet and the road perfectly safe and open. Considerably shyness and distrust

* Not a life was taken; it is doubtful even about a soldier having received a scratch. The long retention of martial law, therefore, and the cold-blooded executions under it, were uncalled-for, such men as Sir A. Oliphant, the Chief Justice, and Lord Torrington's own Queen's Advocate, Mr. H. C. Selby, being judges. But the reason assigned for Lord Torrington's recall was his own personal character, which did not command the respect and obedience of the officers of Government.—Ed.

† In his prompt measures for the suppression of the insurrection, yes: in his subsequent proceedings, there was much that was lamentably wrong.—Ed.

prevailed for some time between Europeans and Sinhalese. The former supposed that there might be another outbreak; if there was, matters would be better managed, and so they might be more successful in their results. But there was no other outbreak, nor was it even contemplated, and it is very unlikely, there ever will be. The Sinhalese are a sharp intelligent race, and they are quite aware of the great progress the people have made under the British rule, that the path to fortune is as open, free, and unrestricted to them as to the white man, and that the happiest time in Ceylon history commenced with the English rule. Life and property are safe, which they never were during the times of the Kandyan kings, for the greatest oppressors the Sinhalese people ever had were their own rulers. It is a curious fact in Indian history, that Indian races cannot govern themselves. *

But I must be careful not to lapse into politics, of which perhaps this paper has occasionally shewn some signs, the excuse for which must be that it is difficult to write on any subject of general public importance, either in past or present times, without, sometimes unconsciously passing a private opinion, such private opinion or opinions not being in accordance with the views of general readers. The offended reader, who probably has been rather admiring and interested, when he comes to the political opinion, throws aside the paper with contempt, with something of an exclamation: “What stuff; what an ass that fellow is. Lord Torrington *was* wrong. It is downright robbery keeping the island of Ceylon; we have stolen it from the natives. And in putting down insurrections and riots matters are made worse, for we are adding murder to robbery.” This is no ideal fancy, for there are people who have talked, do talk, and will in all time to come speak, in this style.

Eventually, perhaps, this outbreak did good, or tended to advance the prosperity and contentment of the people generally. It showed forth to them the promptitude, power, and resources of the rulers; it also showed that, although we were prompt and successful in resisting and repressing aggression, whenever the cause for resistance and repression ceased the ruling power was merciful and forgiving. Just suppose for one moment, and reverse the relative positions. What would have been the after-results had

* It is, at any rate, quite true, that never in all history were the *people* of India and Ceylon in a better position, or a position to be for a moment compared to that which they enjoy under British rule.—Ed.

PROGRESS.

the Sinhalese been the ruling power, and the white men the rebels. What a history of cruelties would have been recorded. Since this so-called rebellion, the Sinhalese have made very rapid and steady progress, in knowledge and general intelligence: the result, perhaps, in some measure, of being settled down and contented, for it most certainly does make a great difference for the better, in the advancement and progress of any nation or people, where they are contented and satisfied with the ruling powers, and the general system of government. They give up talking and thinking about politics, and devote the whole of their attention to progress and advancement in their several callings and occupations. The results are soon apparent in increased comfort and prosperity. One little comfort suggests the necessity for another. A little prosperity induces a craving and striving for more, until many of the upper and even lower classes of Sinhalese have now in a great measure adopted European customs and habits of life. Their houses are furnished in European fashion. Call in upon any one. You will be handed an English-made chair, and asked to take some refreshment, in English bottled "Bass," a glass of sherry, or brandy and water.

Even in Great Britain is it not a fact that when the bulk of the working men commence and devote much attention to politics, disclaim against grievances real or imaginary, is it not a fact that their work is apt to become neglected, and their earnings less, and as a matter of course their homes less comfortable? From these causes many other evil results arise. They consider themselves oppressed and underrated by their superiors and employers, and all the ills under which they suffer arise they imagine from this cause, whereas, instead of blaming others for the low state of their position, were they thoroughly and impartially to examine themselves, very likely, in many or at all events some instances, there is some latent cause or causes within themselves, which, if shaken off, would make them step onward. How often do we see that an increased rate of wages brings no increase of comfort or contentment, but quite the reverse. Increase of wages or remuneration of any sort is hardly an advantage to any class of labourers of any nation, colour, or climate, under the sun, unless they have knowledge or discretion how to manage it. I have known many a good native servant, and even coolies utterly spoilt and rendered almost useless by the master raising their pay.

The writer once had a very good servant who had been in his employment for many years. He

SPOILING A GOOD SERVANT.

asked for no increase of wages. But, thinking he fully deserved it, he was told his monthly pay was increased by ten shillings, and from that day a very marked change for the worse gradually took place in the man. He got careless, in fact even impudent, and after a few months declared his pay was a great deal too small, and requested more. Now had the man been let alone and even kept up to the mark by an occasional reproof, whether he needed it or not, it would have helped him to keep him sharp and attentive. He would not have become confined to an idea that he was a "very good man," and that master could not do without him.

It is exactly the same, perhaps even to a greater extent with the Malabar estate cooly: to a greater extent, because he is more uninformed and ignorant. Raise a good man's pay, and very likely you make him a bad one. It is not so with Europeans: quite the reverse; and it may be a curious and interesting subject of inquiry, Why is it that if you tell a Malabar cooly he is a good hard-working man, and intimate a rise of pay, that man is henceforth quite spoilt? Of course their are exceptins. I do not write of these, but of what is the rule, and in my own experience the rule used to be pretty general.

CHAPTER XIV.

UP-COUNTRY CEMETERIES : ONE SECRET OF THEIR FREQUENTLY NEGLECTED APPEARANCE.

The mortal remains of those Europeans who die in the country are on the same day, or, at any rate, generally within twenty-four hours of their death, consigned to their last resting-place. About towns, where cemeteries are large and spacious, funeral arrangements are easily carried out, but up-country it is different. The bulk of Europeans whose death takes place in the Island are generally during their last illness, unless indeed it be very severe and sudden, conveyed into the towns for the sake of greater comfort and advice from the best medical authorities. Thus deaths are comparatively few in the jungle, but they do take place, and, to meet this emergency, a piece of ground around every up-country chapel is consecrated or set apart as a burial place. If these burying-grounds are not well and regularly kept in good order, rank grasses and jungle underwood encroach upon them, over-running the graves and spreading up to the very door of the church. One of the more immediately adjacent residents generally takes in charge to keep the church-

yard in order, a small annual fund being raised for this purpose. But new arrivals take place, old residents depart, the few sleepers in the lonely churchyard are forgotten, and after the lapse of some years the question of "Who lies here?" is scarcely ever asked, and, if it is, the answer brings back no memories of the past, for the inquirer is a stranger. Not so with the old resident: he remembers the day when a young man fresh from the old country, full of strength, life, and hope, laughed at the old-fashioned system of toiling for a quarter of a century, in order to retire permanently on an independence, with probably the sacrifice of health; he was not so slow as to sacrifice his health and happiness "for the sake of gold." He would go home every three or four years, see his friends, enjoy himself, spend his money, and return to make more. He would not separate himself from parents, home, and country: he had been better advised. He "reckoned without his host." With a constitution not yet fully developed and certainly not hardened or trained to endure hardships, fresh from all the comforts, perhaps luxuries, of home life, needing these comforts all the more, during a sudden and perhaps first illness,—for most new arrivals generally have what is called a "seasoning fever": if they come well through this, they will probably afterwards enjoy very good health, but in some even many cases they don't,—he goes home before the anticipated three or four years. He is carried to his last home on earth, not by loving friends and weeping relations, but by a few strangers, who close their remarks after performing the last rites, by inquiring "Who is to write to his mother, and what is to be done with his watch and clothes? Well, he had the promise of a good planter; he was not a bad sort of fellow; it will be a sad blow to his friends." This is all, and he is forgotten.

On up-country estates a death often caused no little anxiety to the one on whom the duty devolved of carrying out the last duties. There may be no planks for a coffin, and, even if there are, there may be no carpenter. When it is considered that the funeral must take place as soon as possible after the death, the difficulty can be understood. An express is sent off to the nearest neighbour, probably a good many miles off, for the loan of his carpenter. On his arrival, there might possibly be no planks or nails; in this case some old packing-cases are broken up, either for the sake of the wood or nails. Black cloth is not a usual article to be had or in use in the jungle, so probably some old clothes, a remnant of which was brought from "home," coat, trousers, or both, are cut up, and nailed

A LOW-COUNTRY TRIP.

on the coffin, failing which, a dark-colored mantle or plaid is thrown over the rough planks, and with it consigned to the grave. Oh! little did the poor fellow think that his suit of light black clothes made expressly for the climate, and in which he would appear at the Governor's ball in Kandy, were never to be worn, until nailed to his coffin: that he went to Ceylon to die, and carried his shroud in his trunk!

But the bright side is not so bad. If one comes well through their first fever or illness, it will probably do him good, and, with ordinary care, he afterwards enjoy as good health as any in England. As a rule European women do—or rather did—not keep their health on coffee estate. This in a great measure may arise from a want of any occupation or work, anything to do. They cannot go out during the day, unless in a carriage, and comparatively few estates have carriage roads approaching to them. There are plenty of servants to do, over-do, or undo, all the house work. In this department she is a superior amongst many supernumeraries. Well, what can they do? The hardest work of all is—nothing.

The seasoning fever previously referred to may be brought on, as it frequently is, by over-exertion, or too much exposure, on a fresh or after a brief arrival in the country.* The writer had a very severe one:—Early in 1845, coolies being very scarce, my employer determined upon sending me down to some of the northern roads to try and meet immigrant coolies. So, mounted on a good stout pony, with a change of clothes strapped to the saddle, accompanied by a Sinhalese man to act as interpreter, we proceeded to Kandy. Having waited there for a few days every morning visiting the “lines,” without any success, there was nothing for it but to make another start, so we determined on going out the north-western road leading to and beyond Kurunegala. About half-a-mile out of Kandy, we leave the Peradeniya road, and turn sharp off to the right along a winding road with (then) dense brushwood above and below it. A short distance further we have to cross the river by means of ferry raft. At a distance of about sixteen miles† from Kandy we reach the town of Kurunegala, at which we halt for a few days, to try if any coolies can be picked up. At that time the resthouse contained merely a table, a few chairs, and some bedsteads. Travellers were expected to take their own provisions with them, or order them as they came; as for blankets, it was too hot for

*I don't
imagine
a fever!*

* Is there really and necessarily a seasoning fever for arrivals? We doubt it.—ED.

† 26 miles rather.—ED.

KURUNEGALA.

such an article. This used to be a good district for capturing elephants in kraals, and some were to be seen in course of training. The keepers seem to have acquired great power over them; on throwing down a rupee before one, after sundry goadings and punchings from the rider, and some growling and grunting from the elephant, the coin was lifted and given over to the driver or rather rider.

Remaining for a few days at Kurunegala, and no coolies to be seen, we determined to continue our journey. Shortly after leaving the town, the road presented a dreary, de-ert-like appearance. There was little or no traffic; we were getting beyond the bounds of the white man's country. On through flat wastes, with here and there rice-fields in the distance, scrub and low jungle on all sides, the road gradually loses itself, or dwindles into a mere track. My companion, however (a Sinhalese), was invaluable. He always managed to make some convenient native hut for the night. Evidently this sort of work was not new to him. After his holding a short conversation with the owner of the hut, I was always made welcome, a mat was spread, upon which we squatted, rice was boiled, with occasionally a little curry. There were no dishes or spoons; the leaf of a plantain tree served as a plate, but for a spoon, how could it be managed? After several trials, during which more rice was lost than eaten, my Sinhalese friend, with a grim smile, pulls from under his cloth a horn spoon, with the remark, "I knew master could not do it, therefore I borrowed a spoon from my sister's house in Kandy." Never was a spoon more acceptable, and I began to think aloud, "He's as considerate as a white man." "Yes, sir," he says, "plenty considerate," on which he pulled out from his cloth a small bottle of brandy, of which I partook of a spoonful, but nothing would induce him to touch it. "It must be kept for master after a long journey." After a few days' travel, one evening, on rounding a corner, we saw a column of smoke ascending out of some jungle, upon which my guide exclaimed, "Here are coolies at last!" This was the smoke arising from their encampment, where they were cooking their evening rice, and so it proved to be. On arriving at the spot, some 50 to 100 coolies were found, all at their evening meal. On asking them where they were going to, they said they did not know, or very likely, Scotch-like, they asked where I came from, and what was my business. So after explaining, and a great deal of talk and chatter got over, they agreed to go with me, and would be ready to start in half-an-hour. The backward journey was during the night.

MARCHING WITH COOLIES.

Arriving in Kandy very early in the morning, on proceeding to *the* hotel (Queen's), the coolies were told to rest in the stable-yard, until I could get a little rest and sleep, but half-an-hour had hardly elapsed when the whole stable-yard was in a commotion. Some one in the adjoining bedroom had been disturbed in his sleep by the talking of the coolies, and catching hold of his large riding-whip (travellers generally brought their saddles, bridles, and whips, into their bedrooms for security) kept laying about amongst the coolies, until he had them all dispersed, remarking, *in very strong language*, that he was not to be done out of his night's rest by a "lot of black rascals." Judge of my consternation on seeing the result of so much time, labour, and trouble summarily treated in this way. The Sinhalese interpreter and myself did all we could to explain and pacify, but the coolies refused to be comforted. "Had they not engaged to go to the estate, was not I their master, and had they not been beaten in my service, without any great crime?" Such is the general reasoning of the cooly. It was difficult, impossible, to bring them to see than I was in no way to be blamed for the treatment they received. Upon assuring them, if they would only wait till daylight, their wrongs would meet with redress, such was agreed upon. Having ascertained the name of the aggressor, as early as possible, I waited upon "Loku Banda," a descendant of the Kandyan royal family, and at that period Police Magistrate of Kandy. On stating the case, he issued a summons, or warrant, I forget which, to bring the gentleman, guilty of this assault, up before the Police Court. But the gentleman had been too sharp for us: he was nowhere to be found. Having had an inkling of what was going on, he had quietly proceeded to the stable, with saddle and bridle, from his bedroom, mounted his horse, and was probably at the time many miles off into the interior. It may be remarked, "What about his hotel bill?" Hotel proprietors were not particular in this respect. Bills were allowed to lie over, or run on, until another visit from the country took place; almost every one had his hotel account. Of course, with this loose system, money was frequently lost, but the charges were such that a few occasional losses would never inconvenience them. It was quite evident that, instead of pursuing my adversary with a warrant, the wisest policy was to get the coolies out of town and on the march as speedily as possible. So, having settled by bill, we once more take the road *via* Peradeniya, Gampola, and Pussellawa, which has already been described. One hundred or thereabouts, men, women and children, with only a

JUNGLE-FEVER.

rag round their waists, earthen chatties for cooking, and a little rice for food, all carried on the top of the head, a straw or grass mat for sleeping on at night, rolled up, and slung over the back, marshalled in line, two deep. The order was given to march, myself and the Sinhalese interpreter bringing up the rear. On arriving at the several resthouses, where rest and refreshment were required, both for myself and coolies, while taking care not to bring them too near the building, in case of a repetition of what had happened in Kandy, a spot of ground was selected for them, so that they might not be out of sight. In due time we presented ourselves before my employer. The coolies were sent over the rock. Much to my surprise the excitement which kept me up, led me to go to bed, and a medical gentleman who resided at some distance off was immediately sent for. On his arrival, he pronounced me to be fairly in for a sharp and strong attack of jungle fever, stating at the same time, it was a wonder how I had arrived: that, if another day or two had been allowed to run on, I would have been laid up on the road. This jungle fever more or less attacks coolies and masters all along the immigration roads. Generally on a soft short green sward of grass, in the opening of the jungle, may be seen the graves of the coolies who have died on the road. Sometimes, a rude sort of cross may be seen erected at the heads of some of them; these are Christians—probably, almost invariably, Roman Catholics. These graves were dug hurriedly, without any proper tools, in a hard, scorched-up ground, were very shallow, and of insufficient depth. The consequences were that jackals dug into them and fed on the corpses, sometimes even drawing them out of the graves, so that there might be seen, scattered about, bleached skulls and bones. It was even not unusual to see dying coolies and dead bodies, lying along the roadside*; during the onward journey the sick were frequently left behind, in order that the whole gang might hurry on to the estate as speedily as possible. After being located there, a request would be made for a few of the men to return, and bring forward those that were left behind sick.

Coolies have natural feelings and affections, often leaving aged parents in their native villages, depending on the wages which they hope to earn on the coffee estates. When the sad news reaches them, "Died on the road," or when the return gang are reported on their way back, friends and relations come out to meet

* All this is a very old story, referring to a state of things long since improved out of existence.—Ed.

“DIED ON THE ROAD.”

them, and the question is asked : “Where is my son?” to which the reply is given : “Died on the road.” It is heart-rending to hear the wailing and lamentation raised by the relatives of the missing cooly. Yet he was “only a cooly.”

The bones and skeletons of cattle might also be seen along these roads. Drove of coast cattle imported from the Indian continent passed along, on the journey to Kandy, where the owners hoped to realize a sale, at a good profit. Great numbers of these die, or are left behind in a dying state ; on these the jackals prey: after finishing off all the outside flesh, they get inside the carcass, and it was no uncommon sight, on suddenly coming round a corner, on the carcass of a dead bullock, to see one or two jackals crawl out of the body, run a short distance off, turn round, and stare at the unexpected and unwelcome intruder. In this position one scarcely felt comfortable. The jackal is a species of strong fox or wolf, and if two or three were ferociously to attack a man, he would have little chance. This however they never do, unless he is in a helpless or dying state. Few gangs of coolies arrived on the estate, without some deaths occurring on the road, but more took place after arrival on the estate, being worn with the journey, and the sudden change of climate, from the hot and dry one of the low-country to the cutting winds and heavy rains on the mountain ranges ; it is generally some time before the cooly gets hardened. But what with good warm house accommodation, plenty of rice, and a considerate master, he soon regains, or rather gains, strength and muscle, and it would be sometimes difficult to recognize the strong stout muscular man, as the same being who arrived on the estate, six or eight months before, more like an animated bag of bones than anything else. In fact several have stated that, on returning to their villages after some years' residence on a healthy coffee estate, it was with some difficulty even their own mothers recognized them.

It is now very different with the immigrant coolies : the north roads through the Island are comparatively rarely used, or, when used, good accommodation is to be found, at stated spots, in the shape of “lines” erected by Government for the benefit of the coolies. In these they may comfortably rest, until ready and fit to resume the journey, but these roads, as compared with former years, are rarely used. Steamers, and well appointed boats, are always calling for passengers at the different emigration ports, along the coast. These take on board gangs of coolies at a rate of passage money not exceeding two or three shillings a head, landing them in a day or two at Colombo, fresher

COOLIES' BURIAL.

and stronger than when they left their native village. When landed there, if they should be in want of any money they have only to call at the agency office of the estate to which they have agreed to proceed, and will receive any reasonable amount of advances they may require, the agency firm placing the amount to the debit of the planter's account, and advising him by post of the arrival of the gang. All the anxiety of the planter now is that the coolies may not cause him some trouble, by going off to some other estate, so, if they do not make their appearance within a reasonable time, he has to be on the outlook as to what has become of them, or where they have gone to. They are not even under the necessity of going through the march to Kandy, a distance of 72 miles along a good road, fine climate, and healthy country. The railway will take them up in a few hours, at about sixpence each. Once in Kandy, they are all right; they meet friends, and are within a few days' journey of most of the estates, along good roads, with plenty of accommodation. Now, strange as it may appear, there are coolies who will suppose "the former days were better than these," at least who will persist in coming down the northern roads, so utterly deficient are they in calculation, that the expense of the train determines them to proceed by the "old route," because pecuniarily it costs them nothing. They never reckon the value of time.

On every estate, a detached piece of ground, on the patana, or if there are no grass lands, adjoining the forest, is voluntarily selected by the coolies themselves as a burial-place. If a death takes place during the night, at the morning muster the master is informed of the event, as those who are the same caste, or are relatives or friends of the deceased, do not proceed to work. The interment takes place as soon as possible after the death, the same day or the succeeding night. The corpse of the cooly is rolled or swathed in a white cloth, and laid out in his room; men then proceed to construct the bier, done thus:—Two long sticks or young trees the thickness of a man's wrist, are cut from the nearest jungle. These are laid on the ground at a distance apart from each other of about two feet, then sticks are tied across this, about six inches between each other, sufficient to retain the body, leaving the four ends of the large pole free.

The simplest way of describing it may be to say it very much resembles a long narrow hand-barrow. The body, rolled up in a white cloth, without coffin or any other covering, is laid upon this rude bier, which is hoisted upon the shoulders of those appointed to carry it. A loose white cloth is now thrown over

A FUNERAL OF IMPORTANCE.

the body and bier, and the procession proceeds; generally tom-tom beaters bring up the rear. These tom-toms are a sort of rude drum, made of a dried sheep-skin, strong tight on a round wooden hoop, one or two feet in diameter, suspended by a string round the neck of the beater, or he holds it in one hand, while he beats with the other. The beating stick is a small light piece of wood, with a good hard pad at the end, with this the beater strikes sharply on the sheep-skin, producing a sound somewhat similar to a monotonous sound without (to the European ear) music, thus:—Rap, rap, rap; rap, rap, rap; tat, tat, tat. Of course they have quick and slow variations, but one soon gets acquainted with the sound of the tom-tom. It is heard at a great distance off, and from the sound of it all the ordinary estates are quite aware that a death has taken place, and the funeral is in progress. On the procession arriving at the grave, which has been previously dug, the bier is lowered from the shoulders of the bearers, and the body, rolled up in a cloth as before described, laid in its last resting-place; the earth is then filled in and the bier laid on the top of the grave. This may be meant to keep off the jackals from digging up the corpse, although it has not always that effect. The ceremony being over, the coolies retire to the nearest stream, wash all their cloths, and spread them out to dry; then they bathe, and carefully wash themselves, clean out the room of deceased, and all is over. They will not likely, however, proceed to work that day. The funeral described is only that of a poor cooly, and of the lowest caste. Of course there are variations in the style and expense, according to the rank and position of the deceased. Any one of importance has a very different funeral. In such a case, all the works on the estate are stopped for at least half-a-day, and the superintendent may consider himself lucky if he gets off with only this or even with one day. Most of the same caste people from adjoining estates assemble, and there is quite a gathering. Large pots and boilers are borrowed from the bazars, rice in great quantities is boiled, and strangers after the ceremony is over are entertained with curry and rice. A requisition is made to the master for as many leaves of the plantain tree as he will allow. These are cut or torn into temporary plates, which are placed before the visitors, and heaped up with boiled rice. All the guests then collect amongst themselves money, and so liberal are they in this respect, that, after expenses are paid, there is often a surplus, and it is no unusual occurrence for the representatives of the deceased, after

"MASTER'S GOLD."

paying all expenses, to find a (for them) considerable sum of money at their own disposal. They have some curious ideas on the relative position of soul and body, which a short anecdote will illustrate.

An old woman and her daughter lived in one room, and were most industrious money-making, money-loving, folks. They saved a good deal of cash. The elder woman had attained a good age, and was evidently, in the course of nature, not long for this world. At last she was laid up, and her friends considered her dying. A deputation came up to the bungalow to inquire if the master had any gold money, or sovereigns. On asking what they were wanted for, I was told, to melt and pour down the throat of the dying woman? It would cure her, because, as she was so fond of money when in health, if the melted money was now put into her, on her soul touching it, it could not have the courage to leave the body. Of course they got no gold from me for any such purpose, but they procured it elsewhere, only, instead of melting it, they filed it down into dust, washing it down the woman's throat with water, notwithstanding which she died. On endeavouring to expostulate with them on this absurdity, they would not be persuaded, stating that the reason the charm did not act was "It was not master's gold." This was a lesson always to humour them in any harmless absurdity, as there can be no manner of doubt amongst themselves, they were anything but satisfied with the unkind (?) refusal of the master.*

CHAPTER XV.

THE MALABAR COOLY.

Where, at the present time, or rather what would have been the present position of coffee planting without the Malabar cooly? Would it have been in existence now? At all events, certainly not to the same extent. The general character of the cooly is just human nature, and every one knows what that is, in its original uncultivated state; of course, in human nature as in everything else, there are various degrees of good, bad, and indifferent. It would be a useful piece of general information if some authentic statement could be given by any one, as to who first took

* But had the master consented he would have been accessory to manslaughter. Sending particles of indigestible and irritating metal down a sick person's throat is the surest method, next to strangulation, of producing death.—ED.

COOLY IMMIGRATION LONG AGO.

means to introduce coolies into the coffee districts, and what those means and inducements were, as the earliest recollections of the writer do not extend further back than to remember a free, full and voluntary immigration without any advance whatever, the immigrants being pledged to no master or estate, freely following the bent of their own inclination. If they had decided upon going to any particular estate, no inducement would alter their decision, and on arrival at the place of their choice, if their services were not required or refused, nothing could exceed the disappointment which this refusal created. Rather than proceed to any other estate even for a few months, they were quite ready to agree to work for a certain period, merely for their rice, without any wages at all, on the condition or rather implied understanding that, when crop set in, they were to be taken on at the usual rates of pay; or, if they objected, the other alternative was, three days' work in the week, which just allowed them about sufficient funds to pay for their rice, as three days' work at sevenpence was just the price of a quarter of a bushel of rice at seven shillings, but many estates charged only six shillings, which left only a small surplus over, to buy curry stuffs. Cumblies were supplied at about a shilling each. On many estates, Saturday was a half-holiday. The reason for this was difficult to account for, but it did not last long, and subsequently became, or was made use of, as rice issue day, and, if this commodity had to be carried for any distance, it was the reverse of a half-holiday to those who were selected for the transport work. Many of the coolies would only take three-quarters or even half a bushel per month, actually starving themselves in order to receive a larger amount of pay in the balance due. We used in many instances to compel them to accept of rice issues, continually leading them to understand that, whether or not they accepted of a full issue, they would be made to pay for it. What a contrast to the present time, when, at least before the railway was initiated, rice was one of the greatest pests to the planter, the coolies always insisting that they were starving for want of food, even for some days before their usual issue of rice was due. What fine gangs of able-bodied men used to come in, thirty, forty, or fifty under one kangani, with few, frequently no, women and children. In this case, it was no difficult matter *eating* or making out the check roll, for all had worked about equal, at the same rate of pay; and my memory is perfectly vivid yet of some fine gangs of from thirty or forty, who regularly every-pay day received on an average a balance due

A FAIR DAY'S WORK.

from ten to twelve shillings each, but they did not do half the work of what is done now by those who only receive the half of this balance. It was not altogether the fault of the coolies : it was in a great measure, if not entirely, the fault of the superintendents, who did not understand the proper method and system of working coolies in those times. In fact, we were utterly ignorant of what a fair day's work should be. And I do not think, in any occupation whatever, more money has been uselessly lost, and recklessly paid away, than in that of coffee cultivation, after it had been originally commenced. A fear and undefined dread of an insufficient supply of labour has always more or less pervaded the planting community. This has always been "the rock ahead" on which the vessel of coffee planting was about to be shipwrecked. The tale of immigration was stopping, or about to cease, "there would be no coolies, or insufficient supplies to pick the crop"; but, unless in some exceptional cases, this chronic fear has never been practically realized. On the contrary our general labour supply seems more plentiful than ever.

On large estates, yielding good crops, there will always be what is called a push during crop season, perhaps two or three, but the loss of crop during these pushes is a good deal dependent on the state of the weather, more so than on a liberal labour supply. But as the weather is never to be trusted, the planter usually prefers to lean on a liberal cooly supply if he can get it. It has been often, not only remarked but proved, in the current of every-day events in life, that no man knows what he can do until he is pushed to it, and put upon his mettle, and this remark is specially true in respect to the picking of coffee crops. When one is short-handed and has a good crop to pick it is wonderful, if properly directed, with what spirit the coolies will enter upon the work with a proper and liberal incitement in the shape of "ready cash." On the last estate which I managed during a heavy crop, the kanganies unanimously made a request that I should do away with morning muster, on the plea that it was so long before the people could get to the picking. To humour them it was tried for a day or two, and orders were given the evening before, where the pickers were to commence in line. Before daylight, they were all out and were distinctly seen in the grey of the morning all in line with the empty bags on their backs. This was all very well, so long as the task of two bushels and a penny for an extra kutti

METHOD IN PICKING CROP.

sack could easily be gathered. But one never knew the number of pickers gone to work, and so, of course, did not know when they had all come in. The lazy fellows would begin to get tired of it, and either not go to work at all, or quietly slink off at seven or eight o'clock to some quiet corners "fly picking." So this loose system does not answer : it was and (if still practised) is still abused. There is nothing like method, system, and discipline, in picking, as in everything else. Muster the people and march them off to the picking field. If after being mustered and told off, instead of marching, or rather crawling to the spot, they make a bolt of it and run shouting and laughing, as they try to outstrip each other in the race, in order to procure and settle upon the best line, so much the better. It shews a spirit and heart in the work. In this case, there will be no (apparently involuntary) choice of the longest road, winding round turns and zigzags, at the slowest possible pace, but it will be up or down the short cuts : those short cuts from the road above to the one below, always in use when the coolies come from their work, but seldom when going to it—unless it be to task work, which they know must be performed without reference at all to four o'clock. Task work, when practicable, is always desirable, as it gives the cooly an object and aim in his work. Many object to it on the plea that it is seldom, if ever, properly done, but whose fault is that ? Some superintendents take it quite easy because the works are tasked. In my opinion task work requires as much or perhaps more supervision than the mere day labour, not for the quantity of work done but for the quality of it. Where is the saving in weeding by task 200 trees as compared with 150 on the day's work, if the former is so hurriedly and badly done, that on the next round you cannot get more than 100 gone over ? Depend upon it, there are very few works which can be given out on task that do not require a close supervision, so that I am neither condemning nor disapproving of task work, on the contrary, rather favouring it, provided it is understood that it in no way relieves the superintendent from the responsibility of inspecting and checking the quality of the work performed. An active working cooly likes it : it is better for himself and better for his master. A lazy fellow dislikes it, because it is worse for himself insofar that he must do his work, and perhaps worse for his master, inasmuch as bad work may be concealed so as to appear as good. One basket of manure will be emptied into two holes, instead of one, and thus the trees have only half of their allow-

PROMPT PUNISHMENT NECESSARY.

ance. Patches of weeds will be left in corners unpulled up or covered over with prunings, earth or anything else to serve a temporary concealment. This of course merely eventually accelerates their growth. A tree will be left unpruned, or insufficiently, in order that he may keep up with his fellows. When a gang of coolies are tasked at any work, it is extremely advisable that they should all be able to accomplish their task about the same time, as, when a few of the smart workmen begin to drop off, those who are behind them either lose heart or begin to hurry on the work too much, in order to get after their fellows. But there are exceptions to every rule, a general idea. All transport work should, if possible, be done by task, because the quality of the work is not in any way affected injuriously by the quantity actually done. The transport of coffee and rice is especially alluded to. In these works, by insisting on a certain fair daily task, of bags or bushels to be carried, a much better result on the day's work will be attained both to master and coolies. The former will get a bag or a few bushels more, in work from his labourers, and the latter, although having a heavier amount of work to get through with, still accomplish it in less time than on the four o'clock system, and so have more leisure during the afternoons and evenings.

The system of task work was utterly unknown, or at all events never practised, in the olden times. If coolies did not do what was considered a fair amount of work, they were either put absent, or half a day, in the check-roll, or kept out at the *working place*, not at work, till it was dark. With regard to being put absent in the check-roll, the men frequently did not believe it; they considered it merely an idle threat, and even if it was true, as the consequences did not immediately follow, they were not held in very great dread; they were more in dread of being kept out till dark, than of the threat of having their pay stopped, because the results of this were immediate, the punishment succeeding the fault.

Here, again, we have just human nature strongly developed. If the consequences of evil or evil deeds linger in coming, how apt are all men, even although they are of a much higher standing in life and in position than the coolies, to be drawn into evil. They reason thus:—"From this act we will derive an immediate advantage (?) apparent, at all events, any evil consequences will not speedily follow, and after we have reaped the advantage, we will have time to consider, and ward them off, or at all events greatly modify them," and so, as a matter of course, follows the expediency or rather necessity that where punishment of the cooly

MASTER AND COOLY.

is necessary it should follow as speedily as possible on his fault. And it may be from this cause, that the writer has always found, when it was necessary, better to inflict some punishment on a cooly or coolies. The punishment of being kept out an hour later at work, and made to work, was far more effectual, and held more in dread, than when they were told of the act of having been marked absent in the check-roll, and that they had been out at the working place during the ten working hours just for nothing. After a few days, a cooly would forget all about it; not so with being kept out till dark. That was a punishment so very practical and speedy in its operations, as to leave on his memory a very vivid remembrance.

The cooly has much more confidence in his master now than in the olden times, and the master has more confidence in the cooly. They know each other now, which they did not then. It is thought the coolies get attached to their masters, and that the same gangs arriving and departing year after year on the same estate is a proof of this, but it is not so. As a rule, they are, or become, attached to a master, merely because they are acquainted with all his peculiarities, good qualities and bad, they know how to take him, and when to take him. That it is not the master has been frequently proved, in coolies continuing to arrive at, and depart from, the same estate, after their old master had left it. Of course, there are exceptions, but as a rule this has generally been the case. If the new master is kind and considerate, the old one is speedily forgotten. In fact, in this respect, they resemble cats, get accustomed to, and attached to, the place—not the master. Even in many instances, where coolies have followed the master, on his leaving for another estate, it was quite evident they were not comfortable for a long time; they seemed unhappy, there was something wanting, which the presence of the old master could not supply. They wanted their old neighbours; they very much missed the bazar-man, for at the new bazar they could get no credit. They were unknown, and not to be trusted. Then again, when coolies became known, as being annual visitors to a certain estate, they could much more easily command credit, they could even leave for their country, and promise to pay that bazar account when they came back. Not only this, but, better still, they might borrow money from the bazar-man. There can be no manner of doubt that the cooly becomes accustomed and attached to certain places. Hence the remark so often heard in planting matters, that such an estate has a good labour connection.

PETTY FAULTS.

But while pointing out this fact it is by no means intended to in any way depreciate the master, for he has much, everything indeed, in his power in creating and increasing this labor supply, because an estate that is or has been for any time short-handed is entirely dependent on the manager, or the means used by him for increasing the labour force. But after this force is fully established, and the coolies get settled, and like the estate, the same superintendent, who took so much trouble in initiating the labour, were he leaving the estate, would probably be unable to induce any of the coolies to leave with him, especially if he was going to some other district. The only way in which he could do it would be to take them suddenly, pay them up to date, and tell them he was leaving to-morrow and they had better come with him; but leave them for a week, and they would not move. Of course amongst the planting community such shabby acts are unknown, these possible contingencies being merely written to illustrate the character and disposition of the cooly, which was, as it still is, a strange mixture of two extremes, honesty and dishonesty, truth, and falsehood, cleanliness and dirt. Give a cooly a sum of money, send him off with it, to make a payment, or delivery. and, as a rule, one may have no fear of the result. He takes a pride in his commission, and in the punctual and exact execution of it. Ask the same man at the pay table, on handing him eight shillings, if his pay is correct. "Yes, sir," is the prompt reply, but, if you should have made a mistake, and a sixpence slip amongst the four rupees, he will walk off with it, saying nothing. He does not consider this conduct dishonesty. Reverse the case, and he will stick out for his rights, 'sixpence short.' Task them a given number of coffee trees to prune, or weed, they will most likely execute the works quite correctly, as to quantity, with little or no respect to the quality, unless strictly looked after, so that the master, if in his bungalow at his accounts when the cooly presents himself, stating his task is finished, would do well to rise, go out, and examine the quality of the work done—not if the task his done, but *how* it is done. It is the same with regard to truth and falsehood: trust a good man on any matter of importance, he will generally be found perfectly truthful and correct, indeed much more so than many other classes of people, who would scorn to be put in the same balance of principle with the cooly. But he makes light of petty falsehoods, or what are called in European parlance "white lies," while at the same time they attach much importance to the character of being considere

CLEANLINESS AT A DISCOUNT.

truthful. After having given utterance to a glaring untruth, he will frequently clinch the subject, as, in his own estimation, admitting of no manner of doubt, by the remark, "Master knows very well, I cannot tell a lie!"* Cleanliness and dirt: how clean and neat *some* (not all) keep the inside of their little rooms 10 x 8, while up to the very verandah posts, outside, is an accumulation of all manner of filth and dirt. So much so, that, for the interest of both master and cooly, it would be, as it frequently is, considered advisable for the former to put on scavengers once a week to clean round the lines, paying them wages to keep the surroundings of their dwellings clean, and, as far as possible, free from unwholesome smells! Most of them are very particular and regular in bathing after work is over: they may be seen taking their turns under the regular bathing spout, erected for that purpose in one of the most convenient adjacent streams, but after this is done they will rub their bodies over with a good coating of coconut oil, and thus appear under its influence sleek and shining, but after this operation the European, if he has any regard for the sensation in his nostrils, would be wise to keep, if possible, and as far as possible on the weather side of him. Again, their hair after weeks and months of neglect will get somewhat into the shape and appearance of an old rug, or door, mat, until it become intolerable to its owner, from causes that can well be understood, when, on a Sunday, they may be seen sitting at the streams, one shaving the other's head, with some old razor, failing which, the sharp piece of a broken bottle will do. After the incumbrance is cleared away, it is just allowed to grow as before, until another shaving operation becomes necessary.

CHAPTER XVI.

"A GENTLEMANLY ASSISTANT."

Mr. Alexander Sandy was a young man of very gentlemanly demeanour and deportment. He was very tall, several inches over six feet, and very slender in proportion to his height. One had only to look at him, and at once come to the conclusion that he was a gentleman born and bred, and, on entering into conversation, this conclusion was found to be quite a correct one. Who he was, or what were his antecedents, no one knew, and as he himself never spoke

* This is painted true to the life.—Ed.

AN ASSISTANT'S LUGGAGE.

on the subject, but always avoided it, there seemed to be some mystery in connection with his arrival in Ceylon, which was rather a sudden one. Rumours and reports, which are always sure to have something to say on all matters, stated that he had come from some of the Indian Presidencies, in order to get away from the unpleasant pending results of some youthful follies and indiscretions. But whatever rumour and report or the busybodies said were neither affirmed nor contradicted by Mr. Alexander Sandy, who seemed to treat with perfect *nonchalance* all that was said about him, either good, bad, or indifferent. How and by what means it came about was quite unknown, but Mr. Sandy obtained "the ear" of an agency firm, who sent him up to an estate as an assistant to an up-country manager. He was to receive no pay, and was to pay for his board, in return for which, it was expected that he was pledged to undergo, for some undefined period of time, all the arduous duties of a junior assistant. After his introductory preface, it is only necessary to state, that Mr. Sandy presented himself at his manager's bungalow, and was duly installed in a bedroom 10 feet by 12 which was given over for his own private use.

But, before Mr. Sandy installed himself in his room, it was necessary to instal his baggage, of which he had an immense quantity. After stowing away any number of boxes below the bed, there were still a number left out. So all the furniture was cleared out, and trunks put in their places. Two boxes placed in the middle of the room, one above the other, served as a table, and, in the same way, against the wall, forming a very good dressing table, with a small looking-glass placed on the top. Two single trunks projecting from the general pile formed very convenient chairs. And thus it was arranged, that while all the furniture, with the exception of the bed, was ejected from the room, to make room for the luggage, the luggage was made to take the place, and answer the same purpose as the furniture. It also seemed to be useful as taking the place of a door bolt, for if Mr. Sandy was suddenly wanted to go out, especially if it rained heavily, a box would tumble down, so that the door could not be opened. Very probably, in getting it in its proper place, other two would also give way with a crash. So that, if time was an object, and anything of importance had to be attended to, the manager was fain to leave Mr. Sandy and his boxes to settle matters as they could, at their own time, seize his hat and umbrella, and go out to the working place himself. On his return, tired, wet, and probably irritated, the irritation was not at

WORSE THAN USELESS.

all lessened or smoothed down by finding Mr. Sandy quite dry and comfortable, seated at the dining-room table engaged in skinning and stuffing birds, and, to save time and trouble, the boy had set the tiffin, so that the bread, or biscuit plate was standing beside a saucer full of arsenical soap, and the raw skin of a bird opposite the coffee pot. Of course, the manager was excessively angry, and freely stated his opinion that this sort of thing would never do. Mr. Sandy would immediately call his boy, for he had brought his own boy with him, and order the table to be cleared and cleaned, and in the most polite manner apologize for the freedom he had used, so that it was impossible to be angry with him for any length of time, especially when he took his hat and umbrella, begging for instructions, as it was his turn now to go out to the work. He evidently meant well, but could not do what he meant, for, when he got out to the working place, he joked with the women, played with the children, and cuffed or even thrashed some of the men, until the coolies, when they saw him approaching the working place, used to grin with delight, quite sure of having some fun, for even the cuffing and thrashing of the men was looked upon as nothing serious; he did not hit hard. The manager, finding that his assistant was worse than useless in the field, determined on giving him other employment, and told him to keep to the house, do up the check-rolls and accounts, and he himself would look after the out-door work. Mr. Sandy tried his best, and sat day after day poring over the check-roll, the result being, that, after it was finished, the manager declared it all to be so utterly wrong, as to necessitate the drawing out of a new sheet altogether. Mr. Sandy's education had either been neglected, or, what is much more likely, he had neglected to attend to it himself. What was to be done with him? He was quite useless, more than useless, at everything at which he had been tried. And so it was. Mr. Sandy was told as he was a bit of sportsman and naturalist he could do as he liked, and, when his services were required for any purposes, he would be told. When crop set in, as the most useful way of employing his services, he was told to station himself in the cherry-loft, and take in and measure the coffee from the pickers. One day, the manager seeing the gangway leading into the cherry-loft all blocked up with coolies, waiting their turn for measurement, supposing that there might be some push or stoppage in the work, elbowed his way in for the purpose of rendering assistance. He found the platform filled with coolies, standing behind their bags.

which were opened up, but no measuring was going on. Mr. Sandy was seated at the table quite absorbed in the perusal of a novel, perfectly oblivious of the pressing calls which everywhere surrounded and *pressed* upon him.

The manager pulled a bag of coffee close in to the table, seated upon it, took up the picking-book, and did his assistant's work. The latter, hearing an extra bustle, looked up, said nothing, and resumed his reading ; it was evidently some very interesting passage. When the push was over, Mr. Sandy made many polite excuses and apologies for the trouble he had given, stating that he had merely taken a book to put off the time, until a sufficient number had arrived and to get through with it all at once. Notwithstanding this explanation, books were prohibited from being taken into the cherry-loft, but Mr. Sandy had other resources. The demand for writing paper at the store became extensive. What could be the meaning of the increased consumption of stationery ? The manager determined to take a sly peep. So in the early part of the day, when the cherry-loft was all clear, he pulls out the table drawer and examines its contents. He, then, for the first time, becomes aware that Mr. Sandy is a bit of an artist. Sheet after sheet of writing paper presents itself to his astonished gaze, covered over with all manner of caricatures, very neatly and cleverly done. He had no difficulty in recognising himself as playing a very prominent part, and not a very dignified or refined one, in these lively sketches. Nor was this all : a number of letters were there, and Mr. Sandy's replies to them, sealed and ready for posting, no doubt written on the very paper which was supplied for store use. The great demand for paper was now all explained. Mr. Sandy had converted the cherry-loft into an office or writing-room, wherein he carried on all his correspondence, and practised his talent for drawing caricatures ; very neat, pointed, and clever, they were, if he had only confined himself to the cooly men and women, but the manager considered those in which *he* was a prominent figure as very stupid and awkwardly done, shewing very bad taste, or rather no taste at all. It was evident Mr. Sandy was a bit of a blockhead. It would have required very little tact to have known that it was very unlikely the manager would never peep into the table drawer. It was just about one of the likeliest places he would examine, so to leave caricatures of him there showed little wisdom.

Mr. Sandy kept a very small pony of a very peculiar colour. The main colour of the animal was white ; over this were large spots of red, very similar in appear-

A SUDDEN DISAPPEARANCE.

ance to a pegu, but he was not a pegu. When he mounted his pony the stirrup was not used, he gave a leap at once into the saddle; when seated his feet were so near the ground that it was often a source of wonder they did not trip on some protuberance, and bring down both with a smash. The animal had only one pace, and that was a canter; the moment the rider's leg was over his back, he would start off at a canter until he was pulled up. In this case it was difficult to tell whether the rider dismounted or was gently thrown off on his feet. The reins would then be thrown over the nearest coffee tree, and Mr. Sandy would proceed to the working place. During his absence, the pony, who was very fond of coffee leaves, would make a steady attack on the tree over which the reins had been thrown, eating off all the young shoots and tender leaves, so that, if the works requiring to be visited were in any way numerous, Mr. Sandy's pony left distinct and permanent marks that they had been visited. The animal was very hard-worked, as Mr. Sandy never walked if he could possibly ride. Thus, although the store was only five minutes' walk from the bungalow, and he had been engaged in the former all day measuring coffee, writing letters, and drawing caricatures, yet, when his work was done for the day, he would send a cooly to the bungalow, and order his pony to the store.

During the course of events, the manager resigned his situation, and a day was fixed for leaving, and the arrival of a successor. Mr. Sandy seemed sad, for there can be no doubt he entertained a considerable amount of respect and esteem for his superior. He declared his intention of leaving also, but was told he could not, or should not do so, without advising the agency firm who had sent him up. So he wrote to Colombo, handing in his resignation, but in so little esteem did they hold it that no notice whatever was taken. Mr. Sandy was excessively annoyed. In his own estimation it was quite apparent the agency firm did not wish him to leave, and took this very undignified way of preventing his leaving, but he was not to be done, not he: he would leave in spite of them! So carts were procured, and the whole of his luggage sent off, his account was balanced, shewing that he owed his superior about thirty pounds for board; this he put in his pocket, without saying a word, without even saying he would pay it at some future period. He cantered off on the white and red pony, and was never more heard of: what became of him no one knew or cared. These sudden disappearances were nothing unusual, more especially when

PERSEVERANCE.

there happened to be, in various quarters, some little accounts left unsettled. Mr. Sandy had been liberal in ordering supplies as small presents to his manager; the accounts for these were sent in to the latter, who had to pay them, as the storekeepers declared they would never have trusted him, unless they had received the recommendation of the manager.

This general description of Mr. Alexander Sandy is all perfectly true, everything except the name, which of course is fictitious. It, however, by no means is intended to imply that this was the general character of assistants in those times. His case was an exceptional one, and is merely given as an instance of what could be and was tolerated then, as compared with what would be now. This brief and somewhat amusing sketch is not without its moral lesson to the junior members of "the service." If any of these feel that they have little or no interest in their work that they perform, or attempt to perform their duties merely out of a sense of duty, that their heart is not in it, but on the contrary has a leaning towards bird stuffing or any other stuff, or stuffing; if, when the pen is in their hand, for the purpose of balancing check-rolls and drawing out copies of accounts, it almost unconsciously wanders into scribbling love sonnets in praise of the dusky beauty of "Minatchi," or the sketching of rude caricatures in which you become so engrossed, as to be only aroused from your pleasing occupation by the voice of your manager, "Have you not yet got through with those accounts" while you have just time to bundle them all in, under the fly-leaf of the check-roll, and suddenly become very busy in calculation from the ready reckoner; if—but it is needless to go on. Is your heart in your work? After a fair trial, if you find it is not; that you have no patience with those *dreadful coolies*; that, like them, you go out to your work, round the winding roads, and are always looking at your watch, thinking the day is long, and have as quick an ear for the sound of the bell or bugle at four o'clock as the laziest cooly on your roll, don't lose any more time, give it up, and fix upon some more genial occupation, for it is with coffee planting as with every other calling, there is little chance of obtaining any eminence or success in it, by one whose heart is not in his work.

It you find that you cannot, do what you will, enter with heart and spirit into the calling, don't be discouraged, or think that you are wanting in talent. It by no means implies, if you have no talent for coffee planting, you have none for anything else. It is quite a common occurrence in life to make an

A COLONIAL LIFE.

error or have one made, in the original choice of a profession. How often do we hear of the old Scotch saying, when speaking of any one who has been unsuccessful, or unfortunate, 'He's mista'en his trade'; nor is it so only with the assistant and superintendent. The same saying can be applied to many proprietors; Mr. Wildgoose had evidently mistaken his trade. And this is one of the secrets wherein success can be attained in any colony.

Men who had been brought up as banking clerks, or in merchants' offices, or whose talent lay in the management of spinning mills, went out to Australia, at the time of the great run towards that colony, expecting to make their fortunes, but they did n't. They found the clipping or shearing of sheep, and the clearing of land in the bush, however romantic it might read in "The Guide Book to Australia," was a very different thing in practice. They found it was not in their line, and, try it as they liked, they could not *like* it.

It is a matter of history now, and it will be a matter of history in all time to come, the reaction caused in all our colonies, by an overstock of emigrants, and if the question is narrowly examined, it will be found the chief evil, or evils arose, not so much from the number of the immigrants, as the quality of the talent or labour.

We continually hear of some making fortunes in some of our colonies. When this comes under the notice of young men, who are hanging about the old country, and cannot get anything to do, no, not as much as to supply the necessaries of life, the first natural impulse is, to go and do likewise, without at all making any investigation as to whether or not they are in possession of the natural qualities and abilities, which no doubt the successful man they would fain copy had. They do not think how, or why, he has realized a fortune, but merely that he has come from such a colony, and if they proceed there also, no doubt they will be equally successful. Or, to put it briefly, because Mr. A. has returned from Ceylon after a residence of twenty years with a good competency, they have nothing to do but to pack up their trunks, get a few letters of introduction, take out their passage by the P. & O., and come back equally successful, or very probably (such are the bright hopes of youth) in less than half the time, for they are quite sure the man whom they would fain copy was and is "rather a slowcoach." No doubt, but let us look on the other side. Is the other party sure; that he is not too *fast*? I think I see some one, after the day's work is over,

CHANCES.

dressed in pyjamahs, in shirt sleeves, reclining in a long armed chair, pipe in mouth, and the *Ceylon Observer* in his hand. He tosses it aside with a jeer and a sneer, muttering: "It is all very fine for Millie to write in this style, but look at the chances he had; no such luck now for the fellows of our times. Just let me have a chance like that he had, and such a chance as the chances he has lost, would n't I have done a precious sight better than he."

"Chances" are always happening; it is not chances that are awanting, but sharpness of perception and prompt decision, when, where, and how, to grasp them, and when to let them alone and pass by, as unsuitable. Many grasp the latter, and wonder why they don't succeed; a good many seize hold of the former, but the "when, where, and how," don't seem to enter into their calculation. The "when" is at a wrong times the "where," a bad locality, and the "how," without previously calculating the £. s. d. available. Yet they don't and won't blame themselves. Their brains, or mental calculations, if they ever made any calculation at all, were not to blame. "They have no luck." "They have never had the chances their more fortunate acquaintances had." Is it a want of chance, or want of luck, that some have gone and examined a piece of land, with a view to purchase, and gone away pronouncing it is bad, and altogether unsuitable for coffee. Shortly afterwards the land has been purchased by another party who considers it, as it afterwards proved, to be very good. What about luck, in this case? No doubt there are instances of luck, but they are exceptional. Depend upon it, the state of one's brain and clearness of perception are the rule, and another essential to success is promptitude and decision. What matters it if you see a chance, if it is floating gently apart, or even remaining stationary, so that you have only to stretch out your hand and grasp it? What is the use of this chance, if you keep your hands in your pocket's, probably rattling your coin, or counting if there is enough? The time you have been counting, quite absorbed, looking down on the ground, having at last come to the conclusion that you might safely venture has been taken advantage of by some one sharper than yourself.

You slowly draw your hand from your pocket, still lovingly clasping the rupees, loath or afraid to part with them. Slowly they tinkle back into the pocket, slowly the hand is raised, you look up, and find—the prize is gone! "Too late." "Too cautious." These four short words have probably ruined as many

MR. STEDIMAN.

chances as "Too soon," "Too rash." Much has been said and written upon rash speculation, so a word, in conclusion, may be said, on the very cautious, procrastinating man. If he lives long enough, he will probably obtain a competency, but will never be rich. I question much if he will enjoy the fruit of his labours. From long habits, he will be afraid, always in fear of losing it, which will in a great measure mar the pleasure derived from its use.

CHAPTER XVII.

A PRODIGY OF A SCOTCH SUPERINTENDENT.

Mr. John Stediman was quite a different character from Mr. Sandy: he was a Scotchman, and Mr. Sandy was English, which may in some manner account for the difference.* Mr. Stediman did not come out on chance. He was engaged for a term of years, upon five pounds a month, a free house, which was always given, such as it was, and his passage paid out. Arrived on the scene or site of his labours, he devoted his whole and sole attention to them. Such a thing as amusement, recreation, visiting, or receiving visitors, never once entered into his mind. Not that he was the least inhospitable in the way of treating his guests: far from it, but he made no difference for them in any way, told them to amuse themselves as they could during his absence at work. At dinner, it was just plain fare, the invariable curry and rice, with a piece of salt beef, or pork, out of the keg.

Mr. Stediman, although in all points quite consistent in his habits of steadiness, was always willing and ready to make all allowance for those of a contrary habit; he condemned none: all he desired and required was that he should also be let alone, and follow his own line of conduct. He generally was allowed to do so, for all seemed to have a respect for his thoroughly correct, persistently correct course of life. He seldom refused any invitation to a spread or spree. He would sit up till past midnight at the hotels in Kandy, and seemed to enjoy himself more than any one else, while never once making a slip at the social table; the bottle never passed him, whether it was

* Mr. Millie may be thought to be rather "rough" on those of the planters who are Englishmen, and are neither spendthrifts nor neglectful of business. He is referring, of course, to a past generation, but even then the remark is a too sweeping one—Ed.

MERIT AND PROMOTION.

sherry or champagne, but he never drained his glass, his lips would merely touch it. The result was, he had always his wits about him, and just from this very fact he not only seemed to but did enjoy himself far more than others, who had *not* their wits always about them. Whatever might be, any one who wished to see Mr. Stediman, between the hours of 6 A.M. and 4 P.M., never once dreamed of going to the bungalow: that was about the most unlikely place to find him. He frequently had his breakfast sent out to him: at all events, there was no fixed hour for it; the nominal time was ten o'clock, at which it was ready, and at that period of the day, or from it till noon, half-an-hour would be devoted, as it best could be spared. He generally spent his Sundays at home, reading, or taking a quiet walk during the cool of the evening: in fact his neighbours said he was a religious man. Notwithstanding this, during the push of crop, when Sunday work might be considered a necessity, in order to save or secure coffee, which otherwise was in danger of being lost, he would spend the greater part of the day in the pulping-house, measuring in Sunday-picked coffee, and in a general way superintending store work; in the evening, when all was over, he would read his Bible, and some other good book, his principle being, that, [if, from his position, or sense of duty to his employers, he could not properly observe the whole sabbath as it ought to be, there was no reason why he should not keep a portion of it. He thought it no offence to work in order to secure his employer's property from loss, but he did think it wrong, immediately after having done so, to walk off to his next neighbour's to dine and spend the evening. Thoroughly consistent men will generally always have the respect of others, and thus it happened that, although Mr. Stediman was not what is called a popular man, he was respected and esteemed by all who knew him. He asked for no advancement or increase of pay: he knew neither of these would be forthcoming in his present employment, but he plodded on in order to gain a character and experience which would undoubtedly procure, in course of time, remunerative employment; nor was he disappointed, for, after four or five years of this weary apprenticeship, his employer one day told him, if he chose to accept of the situation, he was offered one for him, or had procured it, as manager on a large estate on a salary of £360 per annum with horse-keep and other allowances. Of course he accepted it, and so it was that, at the close of the

A GOOD TRAINING.

month, on receiving his pay of five pounds, he awoke next morning in receipt of a salary of thirty.

Months and years come and go, and during the slack season some of Mr. Stediman's friends determined upon paying him a visit; they find just the same man, only living in a larger and better furnished house. He had an assistant and conductor, but they were merely to assist him in, not to do the work themselves. He went about the same as ever, in rain and sunshine, and not only ordered work to be done, but saw that it was done and done properly. Such are the effects of original training, even if principle should be deficient, but when the two are combined they are generally impregnable, a strong fortress which can treat with indifference and contempt all attempts made to carry it by assault; and so it generally is. Any one on the outlook for a superintendent should by no means overlook the very important question: "Where and by whom was he originally trained?" And so it was and still is, that any sharp clear-headed manager on the lookout for an assistant would do well to consider not only the ability of the applicant, but the character of the estate he has been on, and who first was his superior. For it is beyond a doubt that all or nearly all in every trade or calling must, in some degree, and to a certain extent, more or less, adopt the habits, views and opinions of those to whom they served an apprenticeship, or under whose instructions and regulations they were originally "brought out." There are some managers, and it is to be hoped many, from whom an assistant may with confidence be received, merely on their brief recommendation, the bare fact that they have been a few years under them being quite a sufficient one without any other notice whatever, as there were some managers, and no doubt are *now*, from whom no recommendation whatever would be any inducement to receive an assistant who had been, however nominally, under their training, if training indeed it could be called. Perhaps these remarks are too severe: they may be, if circumstances are considered, for we cannot or could not expect those to train or qualify others for any calling, who never were trained or qualified themselves. It is just reason and common sense, and applicable everywhere in the old country: those who understand their business, whose plain principles are "Business first and pleasure after"; "You can't eat your pudding at night and have it in the morning," are more than likely to turn out their apprentices monfe the same sampt .Only, as we are all crea-

AN OLD PULPER.

tures of habit, take care you don't get into a mere methodical working machine! That is as much to be deprecated as the other way. The machine will make money, and will never use it. He will be like a well-set pulper, take in steadily any amount of *palam*, throw out behind all the refuse and skin, deposit all the good coffee in the receiving cistern, and when the season's work is done, if with him it ever is done, what the better is he of it at all? None: but on the contrary the worse; he is all covered with pulp and slime, teeth of the cylinder all blunt, possibly a good many wires out of the sieve. And others, strangers unknown, are making fine profits out of his grinding, creaking, rattling labours and evolutions. It is just thus with the animated working machine. Every year, he must have some repairs, until at last he becomes worn out, leaving others to spend, or most probably squander, the fruits of all his hard-earned labours. The old-fashioned planter of the days gone by, is now extinct, or, if not, is rarely to be met with, and more rarely noticed; but do not cast out utterly the old planter and old pulper, both have done good services in their day, and may be called upon to do so again. The writer once had an old rattle-trap pulper; it used to grind away, night and day, slow and sure, at the rate of twenty bushels an hour. Times changed; it was stowed away in a dark corner of the store, a water-wheel and crusher took its place, pulping sixty to eighty bushels with ease. Some neighbours wanted to buy the old pulper. I always said "No," for which no definite reason could be given. It was probably looked upon with a feeling of respect, or with some foreboding that an old friend might again prove a friend during a heavy push of crop. So it proved; some trifle went wrong with the new machinery. This sort of thing just requires a beginning, and, do what we could, as fast as one defect was put right, another would take place, more serious than the previous one. The new machinery would not work. Picking could not be stopped, the coffee was rotten ripe, the cherry coffee rotting, steaming, and mouldy. What was to be done? It suddenly flashed through my mind, "Where is the old pulper!" It was discovered in a dark corner of the store, and speedily brought out, set in position on the pulping platform, with temporary spouting attached; no regard was paid to its rusty, dusty, dirty appearance, a little oil was applied to the screws and bolts, handles fixed, and four coolies put on to drive. It creaked, groaned, and shook, as if it

THE OLD PLANTER.

would fall to pieces, but did n't. After a short lapse of time, it just went as smoothly as if it had not lain in a dark corner for a few years, but twenty bushels an hour seemed, for a time, to make no impression on the large heap of coffee. The old pulper was worked day and night by relays of coolies, it was never stopped, until the whole mass of coffee was fairly pulped off. When this was done, the new machinery was set agoing and the old pulper replaced in the dark corner of the store. Who would ever have supposed, when looking at the fine water-wheel with machinery attached, that there would ever have been any occasion to call out the old pulper, or if so, that it could ever have done what it did?

Just so with the old planter: he may be partially wanting, not "up to" all the scientific and wonderful improvements of the present time. Most certainly he is not a double pulper and crusher with water-wheel attached, but do not crush him; if he won't be convinced, let him alone; those who don't or can't float with the stream current will probably, after a time, find themselves in some quiet eddy making regular and monotonous circles under the shade of the bank. Why should those who are going with the current disturb their quiet and harmless life? They are not in the way: nothing they do or can do in the quiet eddy will disturb the onward course of the river.

It has frequently happened that even those who were loudest in their sneers as the old planter have sometimes been fain to seek him out for consultation and advice on some difficult question, and even if his advice or opinion, if acted upon, turned out of no avail, it was an after satisfaction to the sufferer that he had consulted the old planter; he had done all that he could, he had taken the advice of one who ought to know something on this matter, and so he was relieved of some mental responsibility, or it may be self-reproach, if he had failed to consult or despised the consultation of the old planter. Besides, much of their advice on intricate or doubtful questions was somewhat similar to a little gold specked over a quantity of quartz. A little discrimination would easily separate the gold from the quartz, while at the same time you could not obtain or procure the former without also accepting of the latter. Although the old planter was somewhat bigoted, as a rule he seldom gave out that his advice and opinions were all gold, and contained no quartz.

He would say: "I have done so in a similar case. I have found such a course of action answer, and leave you to judge whether or not to do and act as

THE INTELLIGENT YOUNG PLANTER.

I did." Although at the same time it must be added, he was evidently convinced his opinion was right and unassailable, and expected you to act upon it; if you did n't, but did otherwise, and still did not get out of your trouble, he ould look wisely, while talking with a friend, cutting up his cavendish tobacco, and rubbing it up slowly between the palms of his hands, muttering beteen his teeth, clinched on his tobacco pipe, "Just as I expected." "I told him so." "He would not take my advice." But whether his advice was taken or not, it was perfectly evident he was fond of being consulted. It may be, that, although he would not admit it, he could not help feeling that he was getting into the quiet eddy, that the crowd was passing him, and he was made light or little thought of; in fact, that he began to feel himself "small," and not the big man and great authority of the days gone by. And a little consultation or deference paid to his opinion, whether acted upon or not, tended to please him, and lessen the feeling of smallness that was gradually creeping over him. Old planters, don't be offended. The writer is an old planter too, and knows all about it. This sort of feeling is not confined to old planters: it is to be found in the seniors of every profession. Not always, however. There are many exceptions, of which the Editors of the *Observer* are notable ones. They have always gone on with the stream and tide of improvements. More than gone on, they have led, or shown the way, and sometimes even diverted the stream into a different channel, which turned out a better and shorter one than the original course! This somewhat ludicrous sketch of the old planter may also serve as a warning to the younger ones. You can't be always young. If you remain in Ceylon either from choice or necessity, in course of time you will become an old planter also, but this does not involve the necessity of retaining old habits and customs, merely because they *are* old ones. The intelligent young planter has the prospect before him, if he has the power, of superseding old habits and customs by new ones, provided they are better, and can be proved to be better. No doubt, in all times and ages, every novelty or innovation which is or is supposed to be an improvement has had, and ever will have, much to contend against, but these very contentions which will engage it, if the improvement is a sound and correct one in principle, will tend to expose, confirm and consolidate the fact that this said improvement *is* an improvement. It is no use saying, as many do, that there can be no further improvement on an act, it is per-

A GOOD SON.

fect. Scarcely any improvement was yet effected, but what in some future age has been further improved upon. And I perfectly recollect, when the circular sieve was applied to the rattle-trap pulper, in place of the up and down shaking one, many declared no further changes could be effected in pulping machinery!

I think I hear some exclaim: "A nice fellow is this, to liken an old planter to an old rattle-trap pulper. Why, he's just an old pulper himself, and that by his own showing!" Just so. Just an old pulper, laid aside in a corner of one of the world's *stores*, concealed from the view, or rather hidden by the dark dusty reek of "Auld Reekie." But should occasion, necessity, or temporary expedience, require, the old pulper is quite ready and fit again to take his stand on the pulping platform. The dentist, at Bogambra Mills, will soon sharpen his teeth or put in new ones! A good scrub down will take off all the rust, and a coat of paint will make it look like new. Never mind the sharpening of the teeth, or the new coat of paint if the structure is sound and free from rot. The work that the old pulper had done before can be done again, perhaps only, and naturally, a little groaning and creaking at first, but that will wear off.

This discourse on old planters and pulpers has led us away from Mr. Stediman.

If the brief sketch of his opening career was purely a fiction, it would be easy to end it as such, by stating he saved money, bought an estate, retired to the old country, and lived happily all his days or was alive still. But this is no fictitious sketch: it is a story of life. Mr. Stediman lost his health during a trip to the coast for coolies. We all know, health once lost in Ceylon is difficult, frequently impossible, to regain.

So, he began to droop in that quiet, insensible way which settles down on one so gradually, that he himself is not aware of it, until it has gone too far on to admit of a cure. While in this weak state, he was seized with a sharp attack of dysentery, was sent down to Colombo for medical advice and the benefit of the sea air, where he died and was buried. In arranging his affairs after his death, his friends were surprised to find, although he had been called a "screw," stingy, and money-loving, he had saved nothing, left nothing. Where could it all have gone to? This was discovered from his papers. He had periodically remitted to his aged parents, and other relatives, in the old country, who were in poor circumstances, all his savings. We now knew why he

GOOD ADVICE.

had never invested in coffee, and those who gave the matter their attention knew that he had invested in a more permanent investment than coffee, for what is the promise in the fifth commandment, or rather the reward? "That thy days may be long in the land that the Lord giveth thee." Those who take a merely limited view of this promise will say it was not fulfilled, for he was cut down in the prime of the days. Let such consider, the promise does not say what or where the land is. Who knows? The theory is a beautiful one, that for his reward he was taken away from the evil to come; taken away to a better land prepared for him, where our threescore years and ten are but as a dream or shadow, where he will be satisfied indeed with length of days, for he will live for ever and ever.

It used to be a frequent custom amongst planters to laugh and scout at the saving ones amongst them, calling them "stingy screws." But take care how you wantonly or lightly apply the term. A man's heart is a deepwell, often apparently dark and gloomy, but there is generally water at the bottom, although you do n't see it! As a rule people do n't talk of private matters, which don't concern strangers, and because you do n't know what a man does with his money, you have no right to come to the conclusion that he locks it up, is afraid to use it, and is a miserly fellow, unless you can positively prove it. If you cannot, give him the benefit of the doubt, and remember Mr. Stediman.

Having discoursed upon the old planter, we will conclude with a few remarks to the young ones, which of course, and as a matter of course, will probably be laughed at. Never mind. I also have been a young planter, and laughed at old ones.

Be patient and keep your temper with your coolies. If you are bursting with rage, do n't show it, keep your mouth shut, and say nothing, if you cannot say it with coolness and temper. If you feel inclined to give him a cuff ram your clinched fists hard into your belt, until you become cool and steady. Do n't be too great hurry to move on. Once establish a character and position, and there is no doubt but you will *be moved* on. Despise not small savings, for every thing must have a beginning, and most beginnings are small:—

"If thou canst dine upon a crust,
And still hold on, with patient trust,
Nor pine that fortune is unjust;
If in thy progress to renown,
Thou canst endure the scoff or frown
Of those who try to pull thee down;

“BIDE YOUR TIME.”

If thou in darkest days canst find
An inner brightness of the mind
To reconcile thee to thy kind ;
Whatever obstacles control,
Thine hour will come. Go on, true soul,
Thou'lt win the prize, thou'lt reach the goal.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE VALUE OF VIGOROUS LINES OF STIRRING POETRY.

During my passage out to Ceylon, in 1844, on board the steam-ship *Précurseur* via the Cape, in some of the ship's old magazines, lying about for the use of the passengers, I found the small scrap of beautiful poetry with which the last chapter concluded. It was never forgotten, but always remembered, and often repeated in many a trying and difficult position. Its work may not yet be done, and the remembrance of what it has done may perhaps be still the means of inducing others to keep heart and courage, and if they cannot, under existing circumstances, “go forward” at all events hold “their own,” don't slide back ; they may, even, like the old planter, get into a quiet eddy, for a time, but take care that it is only for a time, and so “bide your time.” It is not generally, or perhaps not at all, thought so, but quiet eddies have often proved very useful places, and why should they not be so still ? Being not altogether without motion yourself, although it may be considered a useless one, still you are in action, you are not stagnant, and a stagnant position in any calling whatever is, in every sense, if possible, to be shunned and avoided. Besides, from the quiet eddy you see all that is going past, very probably a good many “fine catches,” and you curse your hard fate, that you can't get out of the eddy to catch a catch ! But stop a little, listen to the distant roar and rush of water ; what is all this coming tumbling down ? A flood, or water-spout, has burst : a crisis, a crash in coffee planting ; on it comes carrying everything before it, and you are thankful you are in the quiet eddy ! Now is your time to get out of the quiet eddy and into the stream before the flood subsides and leaves you there, or rather “as you were.”

But you must be careful not to get out too soon : in that case, you will just be washed away in the current ; neither must you put off too long, or the flood will go down, and leave you worse than before, for it will probably have washed you up higher and

HAPPY RATS.

drier on the bank, beyond the reach of any future flood, or chance, for many a long time to come, if ever. Bide your time and watch your chance. Mind chances are fast passing, and won't wait your time; out with you: at it, grasp it, and off you go!

There was, but it is now extinct, another class of old planters, not very numerous. They came down the stream, none knew from whence. Into the pool (Ceylon) with a great splash, splutter, and dash, round and round they went, one week at Colombo races, another at Nuwara Eliya, and then in a few days elephant shooting, or some other sporting excursion. They were anywhere and everywhere, except on their own estate, for these were proprietors. Round the pool they go; sometimes, at the spill-water (Colombo); it would be thought they were off, but they were not; they had cheated the current, apparently going off with the gentle suction, they would again shoot past and disappear on the old routine. When tired of all this scurry, this planter would return to his estate to rest, and gain strength for another cruise. Big comfortable bungalows they had, with every comfort and luxury. They were hospitable in the extreme, and often when spending a Sunday with them have I been astonished at what pleasure they could have in rummaging about the country living in bad resthouses and tents, neglecting their estates, when they might be so comfortable there.

Sometimes when the butler with a bunch of keys at his belt, opened the store-room door, to take out some necessary supplies, have I gazed in, as has been remarked about coolies going for rice, with a hungry visage. For there was revealed to my wondering eyes shelves placed along the wall on which were ranged rows of pots of jams, pickles, sauces, and what not; from the rafters hung hams, bacon, and smoked tongues; on the ground were piles of bottles, containing all sorts of wines and liqueurs; and in a back corner stood some tall fellows, capped with tinfoil, evidently containing champagne, but almost covered over with earth, excavations of rats. For the rats held wild revelry here: open casks of salt-butter perceptibly contained their marks, and it was quite certain they had been tasting all the cheeses to see which were best. They had such a choice of good things, that they had become nice and particular as to the quality of their food. We would turn away and sigh:—"Happy rats! To-morrow morning we must return to our curry and rice, and mud bungalow and hard work. When can we ever hope to attain to this perfection in planting life? What a fine thing it must be to be a pro

PROPRIETORY MANAGERS.

prietor!" This class of planter managed (?) his own estate, during his brief, uncertain, and periodical visits; during his absence, a conductor mismanaged it. He was always short of coolies, and the neat, well-kept, well-furnished bungalow used to present a contrast to the coffee, all covered with weeds, unpruned, uncultivated. During crop a great loss must have taken place. I have known estates, with say eight hundred to a thousand cwt. of crop on the trees, and only thirty or forty coolies on them. No wonder the proprietor could not bear the sight, and, as a last resource, ordered his conductor to beg or borrow coolies where he could, packed up his travelling-box, and took himself off. On his return, knowing from past experience that he would feel dull and lonely, he could bring troops of friends with him, and have a regular "kick-up."

It was a curious fact, that estates managed by their proprietors and conductors were nearly always short of coolies: one would be apt naturally to suppose that it would have been quite the reverse. And no doubt it would have been had the proprietors acted in a different manner, for how can, or could, any one attend to his business, especially such a business which requires such constant and careful supervision, when he was never at home? There used to be a current saying, that no proprietor could manage and work his own property. If you substitute the word *would* for *could* you would be nearer the mark. The same or much about the same principle applies to landowners at home. A landed proprietor farming his own property frequently can't make it pay. He gets into debt and difficulty, and lets it out to an enterprising practical tenant at a good rent. He, after paying his rent, and his own personal expenditure, makes it pay; he saves money. The principle is the same in both cases. The landed proprietor at home or abroad is his own master, amenable to no one, he can do what he likes, and it is only human nature that he should prefer amusement to work. There is little or no excuse for the landed proprietor at home, but great for the one in Ceylon. The latter is in an unsuitable climate, where it requires some incentive power to work; the constitution gets down, and work is not advisable, if it can be avoided—but it is no use going on, we know all about it. Many who read this will, like myself, probably have had some very practical feelings in this experience. The superintendent must rouse up and exert himself, or he will be roused out of his place, lose his character, and find it difficult to procure another situation; not so with the

UNSUCCESSFUL SPECULATION.

proprietor, and thus is very easily explained what, at first, seems a strange anomaly.

Two gentlemen leaped into the pool, into the very centre of it, with a great dash, which finally ended in a smash ! They were going to perform wonders : tough beef and stringy mutton were soon to become a matter of history. " Bass " and " Alsopp " would be ruined, for who would drink their decoctions when better stuff would be brewed in the Colony at one-half or one-fourth the price ? They bought land in Nuwara Eliya, and first of all built a [fine and] very expensive house. What a curious starting that used to be in almost every undertaking, however uncertain and hazardous, the building of an expensive house ! One would have thought that this proceeding should or would have been the last thing gone into, that people would have waited until they saw whether or not their operations or speculations presented any chance of success. Besides, building in those times was very expensive ; it sank money, yielding no returns. How often have I and many others also seen the *remains* of a very fine bungalow standing in a wilderness of weeds and jungle scrub, which had once been coffee. What a melancholy sight, what painful recollections it called up, especially if a few years before you happened to have been a guest in it, when the hopeful owner was in all the pride and zenith of his power. It is my intention at some future time in these writings to devote a chapter to this subject, headed " The Dying Confessions or Revelations of an Old Bungalow." The Ramboda Pass was thronged with bullock carts laden with agricultural instruments of every description, direct from England ; inside the carts were pens containing English sheep, pigs and poultry and all manner of grain seeds in bags and stocks. The eyes of the old planter travelling down the Pass would be astonished and gladdened at the sight of real English cattle and horses being led up the Pass to the farm, and, in order that the whole affair might be completed in slap-up style. English-built carriage and English horses were only a reasonable *finale*, of course all the establishment could never be managed or worked by natives. English men and women servants were amongst the *attachés*. But it is no use going on : all old hands must recollect this undertaking, and all new ones must have heard of it, and all about it. But somehow this dashing speculation did n't do, it soon fell through, the stock did n't breed and fatten, and the beer did not take the market, people did not drink, or what was more likely drank it once and did not do so any more ! They actually

FAILURE OF THE NUWARA ELIYA BREWING.

had the bad taste to prefer the *taste* of Bass and Al-sopp, although it was more than double the price. It was even hinted that the gentlemen did not drink their own beer, as sundry casks of "Bass" were seen peeping out of the casks as the carts were ascending the Pass! Their men-servants began to open their eyes, and soon saw theirs was no fit position for them in a Colony like this, and so they wisely got out of the position as soon as they could, and started for themselves in a more humble way. The women also found the same objections to the position, and as opportunities were numerous they caught hold of what seemed to their idea the most suitable, and changed their position. The English carriage and horses tumbled over a precipice on the Ramboda Pass, the former being smashed to pieces, and the latter killed. (Mr. Editor, do you recollect what became of the groom or driver? I don't think any human lives were lost.*) Never did any undertaking result in such utter shipwreck: not one fortunate or redeeming point, and the amount of money lost by its originators, utterly, hopelessly lost, could not have been less than £25,000, at least so it was said. They disappeared from the scene, and were no more heard of. Yes, one has been heard of, not very long ago. All this hard cash sunk in the mud of the pool, beyond recovery. For the curious peculiarity of the mud was that money sunk in it not only could never be recovered, but was converted into mud, which only increased its muddiness and tendency to absorb more, until at last the pool showed some very alarming signs that it would become quite choked up with mud, and nothing else.

The failure of the undertaking above recorded by no means implies that a similar one, conducted on a more rational and reasonable system by *practical* men, would not meet with some degree of success. Not in Nuwara Eliya, for the climate there is too wet, and the natural grasses too poor; but further down the Pass towards Wilson's Bungalow, or even in the plains where the soil is first-rate, and the climate dry and pleasant. Just observe the sleek fat appearance of the native cattle pasturing in these plains, and observe the plentiful crops of vegetables they easily raise in their small gardens. The great drawback however is the wind, which certainly does blow, as it blows nowhere else. When superintendent of Weddemulle, I myself had an idea of entering into something of this sort, and even went so far as to apply for a piece of land, but circumstances occurred which necessitated my removal to another district, and the idea was given up. It was to start a stock station, buy

* None.—Ed.

FARMING ON THE HILLS.

lean cattle from the coast cheap, remove them to the station, and with a little care and attention, without any great expense, why should they not become sleek and fat, ready for the butcher too? They would then sell for double or treble the price they originally cost. If my memory serves me aright, Messrs. Kellow and Cotton adopted this plan on a small scale, with great success. The potatoes that grew there were very much superior in quality to those grown in Nuwara Eliya: they were much drier; and the cabbages, although not so large, of very much finer quality. These gentlemen purchased land in the forest immediately behind Wilson's Bungalow, on which, they were not content with growing potatoes and vegetables, but also planted coffee, which, when last seen by me, appeared to be very promising. But I have since heard the promise was not realized, and it eventually did not turn out well; it could not have been the fault of the soil, than which none could be better: I suspect it was the climate, a little too high in elevation, for it was certainly cold there, before the sun got up.

Let the practical result of coffee planting at Wilson's Bungalow not be lost sight of by "the fellow who said it." Why should not my own idea of starting a stock station even yet be taken up, and of course improved upon, by some others, by some who have a good idea of stock? The want of water may be urged, but there is plenty on the adjoining forest ranges, where the Australian plan might be adopted of having a home station, growing all sorts of vegetables, Indian corn, &c., and the stock driven out occasionally to the far-off "runs." The same drawbacks of transport would not exist now, with a railway to Gampola, and I should suppose a good and steady market would always be found in Colombo and Kandy for fat beef, mutton, pork, poultry, and all sorts of vegetables. The failure of the Nuwara Eliya farm need not deter any practical man, for is it not a fact that some of the original subordinates in the undertaking have done very well, made money, and retired from Ceylon, but in somewhat the same way, only on a smaller scale, than what is here proposed, and since it has been proved to answer and be remunerative on a small scale, why not equally so on a large one, that is always provided the demand will not be under the supply? I should think not, but on the contrary the greater the supply the more also would be the demand. It has always been one of the great complaints of the Island, the want of a full, regular, and cheap supply of vegeta-

THE FUTURE.

bles, and it has even been asserted, no doubt with truth, that this want has been the origin of some of the diseases of the country, induced or produced after a long residence. It was not only as was often supposed the tough beef and the curry and rice that produced dyspepsia and other complaints, it was also a total want of or an irregular or insufficient supply of vegetable diet. When we look back on the changes that have taken place during the last thirty years, changes which, if they had been predicted to that generation, would have been received with shouts of laughter and scorn, as the emanations of a madman, may we not look forward and speculate on changes which *may* take place in the thirty years to come. They are possible, just as possible as what has already been realized. We may see the whole upper valley of Pundaluoya planted in coffee*; no doubt the trees will be very luxuriant in leaves, and we hope they will also have abundant crops, but we will never see, what may be, but not in our time, comfortable bungalows with tall chimneys, standing at the base of the forest-clad mountains which bound the Wilson's Bungalow Plains, sending forth blue curling smoke, plainly perceptible at a great distance off, against the dark background of forest; the interior and eternal surroundings of these bungalows present all the appearance of an Australian settler's locality, only with this difference—the Uva Railway station! Only fancy, green peas, cabbages, potatoes, fine fat beef, pork, and mutton, just down by train from the Uva farm. Yes, fancy this advertisement appearing in the *Ceylon Observer* of 1905. You, Mr. Editor, who like myself have seen such changes, do you think it impossible? “The fellow who said it” may live (I hope he will, for he is but a young man) to see all this, or even more. If he does, and a memory of olden time passes like a dream through his mind, perhaps he will call to mind “Thirty Years Ago.” He may then be writing similar reminiscences of the present time, under the same title, for he himself will then have become “Thirty Years Ago,” and the writer of this will have been, not be, “the fellow who said it.” What a difference the two brief words, *was* and *is*, make. He was the fellow who said it! I cannot, never will, see what may be thirty years hence. I can never comment on the thirty years to come, after they are gone, as has been done, and hope may still continue, on thirty years ago; only, seeing what has been done in the past, scarcely any limit can be affixed to what may result in the future.

Having closed the last chapter with a few lines of poetry, addressed to young planters, or rather advice

* If not, with tea and cinchona.—ED.

AN ISOLATED ESTATE.

to them, we would close this, at the close of another year, in the same way, only in memory of the old planters, and if readers, in their minds, would substitute the word years for planters (as the latter will not make correct metre) it will make a very fitting termination to the subject :—

“ Silently passed away the years in their shrouds;
Nor heeded the cheers, which the young New Years
Were welcomed by the crowds;
Nor knew that they left behind,
In the thoughts that never can die,
Of good and of bad, of merry and sad,
A ghostly memory .

To the memory of old planters in the years that have gone, and success better success, to the young ones, in the years to come. May they also become old planters too, and successful ones, is the New Year's wish of their old friend and well-wisher, even although they may never have seen him, and never will. Even when writing, an old planter has passed away at Elgin, on Christmas day. Sad news for Ceylon, for he was known and deservedly esteemed through the length and breadth of the land. Three months ago, I saw him talking of going out again! but instead, he has gone home.

CHAPTER XIX.

AN ESTATE IN OLDEN TIMES. A PRISON WITH FOREST TREES FOR RETAINING WALLS.

In these days, there was an estate, no matter where, it was there, and to any inquiry as to where the only reply is somewhere. On this estate, there was, of course, a superintendent; shall we say, his name was Brown? What? Andrew Brown, back again? It was even before Brown's last exploits, further back than that. We shall say, as we must say something, that his name was Green. We have it, say some knowing ones. It is the writer himself? We have heard that he once was *green*, very, about these times, but that as he got bronzed with the sun, and climate, he became *brown*! Say away, say anything you like, we will have no dispute about names. What's in a name? A man must have one, and as well be called Mr. Green as anything else, provided you are not green!

This estate was an isolated one, entirely surrounded by jungle, a spot cut out of a vast surrounding forest. All round the clearing was a wall of standing forest: as far as the eye could reach, nothing was seen but

dense forest up to the very mountain tops. On the back range was this everlasting forest, beyond ; the hill-tops was nothing but blue sky, when it could be seen ; and that was seldom, except in the dry cold months of the north-east monsoon. Mist generally enveloped the top of the mountains. No other estate was near, so that it could be likened to a large prison, whose walls were standing jungle. And what a small object even a large estate looks, when it is only a spot, cut out of a mass of forest. The extent seems so small, as compared with what meets the eye, around and beyond it.

On this estate, of course, there was a bungalow, in the (then) usual style, from the verandah of which Mr. Green had gazed, during his leisure hours and on Sundays, until every tree, with any specialty, or peculiarity, in the surrounding forest, had become quite familiar to his eye. He had become quite tired looking out on the monotonous scene, in fact had turned the back of his arm-chair to it, reclining on which, after breakfast, he now, for a change, fixed his eyes, steadily, on the mud wall of the bungalow. In this dreamy state, he heard a faint sound, a well-known one, which made him start suddenly up, all animation, and strain and stretch his eyes over the vast extent of forest. Eagerly he looked, looked in vain, listened, and sat down again. "It must have just been an old dîn tree, rotten and decayed, which had tumbled down in the forest." Frequently one used to be startled with this sound, in the silent jungles, the curious fact being that it was generally always on a calm quiet day ; or was it that it was only heard on a calm day. An old tree—who can tell how old, how many centuries of time it had seen—had become perfectly rotten in the stem, full of decay : it was wonderful how it held together at all, but its time had come at last, and down it came suddenly roaring and crashing, the echoes of its fall making the whole surrounding forest resound, and the dust or "stour" created by its fall rising out of the jungles far over the tree-tops, like a cloud of smoke.

The next day, after breakfast, Mr. Green was again startled by two or three faint distant sounds of falling trees. He could not understand it, or, rather, he began to have some idea what it was, and became very fidgetty. On stretching his eyesight over the unbroken expanse of jungle in the direction where the sounds came from, he fancied there was some change in the unbroken view—in fact, he fancied, it might be only fancy, that a portion of the forest seemed lighter, or somewhat different, he could not tell what, from

FELLING FOREST.

what it used to be. He could not take his eyes off the spot, and even as he looked a wider space of light suddenly opened out, succeeded by a crash of falling trees. There was no mistake about it now! It was the felling of forest. He had neighbours, or was going to have them. Some one was opening an estate in the immediate vicinity. Taking out his pocket compass, he took the bearing of the small light open spot, also of a big tree at the edge of his own coffee. "Tomorrow morning," says Mr. Green, "I will solve this mystery, or my name is not Green." At morning muster four coolies, with Mr. Green behind them, proceeded to the big tree, at the edge of the clearing. They commenced cutting a path through the jungle, Mr. Green, compass in hand, pointing out the direction. No matter what the ground was, down steep rocky banks of rivers and up the other side, still on, on the same course, until the compass was no longer necessary, for the constant ringing of axes, and the falling trees, kept them to their course, which brought them out into a mass of felled timber, unlopped. Mr. Green clambered along the trunk of a felled dūn tree, and then up one of its ragged branches, and saw a large clearing, in process of lopping. At a rough guess, it must be considerably more than 100 acres. A few grass and talipot huts were standing at the edge of the clearing, and on making inquiry there, as to who was the master, no satisfactory response could be elicited. The only definite information given, or distinctly understood, was, that they had not been paid for two months, neither had they any rice! Mr. Green turned on his way back inwardly remarking:—"Always so, go where you will. Pay and rice! They can speak about nothing else. I wonder if they ever think about anything else or of anything that is not immediately connected with these two all-important objects of life." Yes, they do speak of something else or rather somebody, and that somebody is the master, although, of course, what they do say is a secret amongst themselves, a sort of freemasonry, and perhaps it is just as well for the master's peace of mind that it is so. There was now nothing for it but to wait with patience until the clearing was burnt. After this event, of course roads would be cut, a bungalow built, which, also, as a matter of course, would have an inhabitant, and many a quiet surmise Mr. Green had, as to who his neighbour would be, and what sort of a fellow, and as to whether they would be neighbourly, or adopt the usual proceeding of near and dear neighbours, which was to quarrel.

In due course of time, after a long spell of dry

THE EXPENSIVE STYLE.

weather, a dense mass of smoke arose out of the jungle : the new estate was fired. It burned away in the usual style, which has already been described in a previous chapter ; indeed, on the upper slope of the mountain range it caught in the bamboo underwood, and burnt and scorched the trees for a good way into the forest, an occurrence not at all desirable, for the forest trees, so scorched, die and stand so, bleached and blackened, for years, rendering it very unsafe to work or walk under their shadow, especially on a windy day, for who can tell, how, when, and where, a large limb or branch may come tumbling down, or even a very small one, which, dropping on one's head from a great height, would be just as effectual in causing an unpleasant accident as a larger one : perhaps more so, as it drops in a quieter way, with no premonitory signs. Mr. Green sometimes took a walk through the jungle to see what was going on. They, whoever they were, had certainly commenced in style ; beautifully traced roads were in course of cutting ; no respect was paid to the nature of the ground : rocks were no obstacles, they were blasted ; precipices were looked upon with contempt, they were cut through, and as for convenient crossings on the rivers and streams, they were never looked for ; it was quite evident they intended going in for expensive bridges. The lining and holing was perfect, as far as regarded straight lines ; if a rock or boulder was in the way, if it was possible to move it out, it would be done regardless of any expense. Expenditure seemed no object here. A neat temporary bungalow was put up, made of wooden planks, and it had actually glass doors and windows, made of jackwood, and sent up from Colombo ; it had also sawn rafters, plank floors, even the verandah was planked. The plan was in the usual style, sitting-room in the centre, with bedrooms on each side, and a verandah all round. This, for these times, was considered a first-class bungalow, something "by common."

But what specially struck one was the large number of sawyers employed. Scattered all over the clearing, were temporary saw-pits ; timber of all sorts and sizes, lay about in heaps. It was quite evident that buildings of no ordinary style and structure had been decided on. Of course, Mr. Green made the acquaintance of the resident European, who although not decidedly saying so, certainly, from his conversation, led one to suppose that *he* was either the proprietor or a co-proprietor, a piece of silly pride, or self-sufficient importance, which in these times resident managers of ten adopted, a deception frequently carried on for years, with success.

if once established, for there was nothing to expose it. In those times there were no monthly visitors, and few visiting agents. If they did turn up occasionally, their visits were passed off as those of friends, and certainly, in general, they partook more of and looked more like the latter than the former, in fact nothing could be more difficult than to ascertain *who* was the proprietor, or were the proprietors, of a great many estates.

"Ferguson's Directory" was not then in existence, and if it had been would n't the compiler have had his difficulties in filling up the proprietor's column in his list ! This led to many abuses ; those who were considered owners, and, as such, had incurred heavy pecuniary responsibilities, suddenly went off we will say. "The proprietor" had been sacked from some unknown source, and it was then discovered that he was not the proprietor, when bills were presented to his successor, who refused to have anything to do with them. The successor, in his turn, would perhaps give out that he had bought the estate, and would probably succeed in the deception, until he himself also got his "walking-stick." What a different state of matters exists in our present times, and how well-known now are all partnerships, owners, with their names, absent or resident ; and with this knowledge how secure are traders, chettiss, &c., in their dealings with estates, as compared with "the days of old." This state of matters has been mainly brought about by "Ferguson's Directory," a work which has arrived at a perfection of correctness, and which must have entailed no ordinary trouble on its editors ; not only this, but the constant annual revision and correction, induced by the repeated changes always going on amongst the planters, must entail a work of no small difficulty and trouble, especially when we take into consideration that, even when the work is in the press, changes are taking place, so that perfect accuracy in this book is simply impossible.

The nominal proprietor, or rather the actual manager of this estate, finding the demands for pay becoming excessively troublesome, packed up his boxes and went off to Colombo, on the very plausible pretext that he was going to procure funds to pay up everything. He went off, and was neither seen nor heard of any more. No doubt he managed to arrange the little sum due himself, and left all his subordinates to manage for themselves. This they did by hanging about the estate, in the hope that something or somebody would turn up, but nothing or nobody did, until at last they were starved out, and went away, leaving the estate desolate. After some time a common uneducated man arrived as superintendent, but

A FISCAL'S SALE.

as he had no coolies, money, or rice, of course he could do nothing. So he lived in the bungalow, as the man in possession. Rather dull work, but he was an industrious fellow, and set to work on all the waste pieces of ground, with pickaxe and spade, clearing and trenching for vegetables. He grew capital cabbages, carrots, turnips, and what not; and, more than that, lived on them, and when he wanted some cash, he filled a gunny-bag with this garden produce, went round the neighbouring estates, and returned lighter in load, but heavier in pocket. This sort of thing went on for months, until the whole estate lapsed into a wilderness of weeds and jungle. Our resident superintendent, finding all his demands for cash, even for his own pay, quite useless, goes into Kandy, and procures a fiscal's warrant for the sale of the property, to cover his own claim, in the shape of arrears of pay due. This was placarded on the door of the bungalow, and advertised in the local papers, as the columns of the *Observer* of that date, if still extant, can testify.

The day of sale duly arrived; and when the fiscal or his deputy made his appearance, there was only one planter present, his assistant. The claim of the plaintiff amounted to about £40 : at this sum the estate was put up, and for this sum it was knocked down. 150 acres cleared and planted, 100 acres felled, and it would be hard to say how many more hundreds of acres in forest. Of course there were no title-deeds; but the fiscal declared that his receipt for the money was the very best title that could be given, and so all matters appeared satisfactorily concluded. Mr. Green was installed as resident superintendent, two hundred coolies were at once put on to put the place in order, and all was bustle and activity, where silence and solitude had so long reigned. Two hundred coolies soon made a hole in the weeds, and gradually the place began to look once more like a coffee estate.

Mr. Green had finished breakfast and was sitting in his verandah smoking his pipe, when the unusual sight presented itself of a stout gentleman rounding the corner towards the bungalow, riding on a very small pony, but his astonishment was unbounded at what followed the gentleman—a regiment of coolies, marching in military fashion, two deep, only instead of muskets they shouldered stout long poles! They marched well, kept step, and so they drew up in the open space in front of the bungalow, wheeled round, surrounded the whole house and grounded their long poles, so that Mr. Green found himself in a stato of blockade or siege. The gentleman then dismounted from his pony, entered the bungalow, and addressed Mr.

AN ASSAULT-AT-ARMS.

Green, told him he was here in unlawful possession, that he was sorry to interfere, but he was acting under stringent instructions from his superiors, and that he (Mr. Green) must pack up and depart, and take all his coolies with him, or, and he significantly pointed to his regiment in siege of the house, he would be under the necessity of forcibly ejecting him. Mr. Green, with the utmost politeness, requested the head of the besieging force to step in, and have—a glass of brandy and water. The general of the assailing force stepped in, but would neither sit down nor “liquor up”; he seemed restless and impatient, casting glances at the lines, where the coolies seemed making preparations with long sticks also. Mr. Green stated that he was here under instructions from his employer, that he could not give up or evacuate the estate without communicating with him, and asked for an hour’s truce, a cessation of all hostile intent, which, after some demurring, was granted, and the besieging force, instead of standing round the bungalow, sat down on “their hunkers.” In the meantime Mr. Green despatched a cooly in hot haste for his employer. The hour’s truce was about elapsed, the besieging general looked at his watch, and said time was up. Mr. Green was meditating whether it would be his duty to capitulate gracefully or submit to be forcibly bundled out, when a white hat was seen in the distance making frantic leaps and tumbles over logs and rocks, and a gentleman rushed breathless into the bungalow, addressing the invader, “What is the meaning of all this?” The meaning was soon explained. The immediate reply was, “Mr. Green, is your gun loaded?”

“Yes,” says Mr. Green, “both guns are loaded with ball, as I was out last evening after elk and did not get a shot.”

“Bring them here.” “Now,” says the employer, “the first cooly that enters this bungalow to take possession I will shoot him dead, and his blood be on your head” (addressing the invading chief); “in fact I am not quite sure that the proper course would not be to commence by putting a ball through your own brain,” and as he spoke the hammer of the gun gave a very significant *click*. Have any of our readers ever had a practical experience of this *click*? A cold hard eye fixed upon yours, not a quiver or movement of a single feature, no ultimatum proposed, not “Yes” or “No,” but “Yes” or click, click! Whatever the invader may have felt, he kept and appeared to be perfectly calm.

“I am acting under instructions,” says he, “but I

FLODDEN FIELD.

am not bound to carry them out with the shedding of blood. I will not undertake the responsibility, and so, if you will put down your threat on paper and present it to me, we will withdraw under protest of being in danger of our lives."

"Mr. Green, bring out your writing materials," says his employer. They were speedily produced, when a written note was drawn out stating that force would be met by force, and any attempt to take possession of the estate or bungalow would be attended with bloodshed.

"That will do," says the enemy, "and now we withdraw.

"And," says Mr. Green's employer, "away with you, and be ashamed of yourselves, in a civilized country under British rule and law, for adopting this most extraordinary proceeding. If you are wronged or injured in any way, or suppose you are, the law is open. Resort to it, not to two or three hundred coolies armed with big sticks. That for your coolies and sticks!" And he pitched the end of a lighted cigar into the "crupper" of the last man that rounded the corner on their departure. The lighted cigar we believe had taken effect, for, although nothing was to be seen, we heard shouts of "appa-appa-a-a!"

Mr. Green and his employer burst out a laughing, and thus were ended the eventful events of the day. For some time after the estate was called Flodden Field. The case was tried in the local Courts, and there can be no manner of doubt but that it was all duly reported in the *Colombo Observer* of 1849. The estate again lapsed into jungle and weeds, a case of dog-in-the manger with the proprietors, for they would neither sell, cultivate, nor allow others to cultivate. One would have thought the common-sense plan would have been, as the estate was partially reclaimed, to have allowed the purchaser to go on under protest, or, if taken from him, that he be refunded for money spent in its reclamation, for it was evident all that the proprietors cared about was their own rights, and to establish those rights.

After this true story let no one say a fiscal's sale and receipt for the money is the best title-deed.

CHAPTER XX.

SELECTING, SURVEYING, AND PURCHASING LAND, IN THE OLDEN DAYS.

Coffee, in order to be a permanent and remunerative investment, must always be planted on forest land. Thus, the original cost of purchase is comparatively of

APPLICATIONS AND SURVEYS.

small amount, when the after expenditure of felling and clearing is taken into consideration. The intending purchaser, having selected a tract of land, handed in his application for the same to the Surveyor General's office, giving a description of its locality, boundaries, and extent in acres required. In course of time a Government surveyor was sent out, who cut out the boundaries and measured the land, not however being pledged to the exact boundaries or acreage, as desired by the intending purchaser. The object was to connect the surveys as much as possible, as also, while paying due respect to the wishes of the intending purchaser, to take care that a due proportion of waste or unsuitable land is also included, on the same principle as the old Scotch proverb, "Buy beef, buy bone." Were this not attended to, the plan survey of the country would present an unsightly appearance with many intersecting portions of useless and unavailable land. The application of the intending purchaser gives him no right or claim upon the land. When the survey is completed, the block is advertised to be sold by public auction, at the Kandy court-house, on a given day, one month from the date of the first advertisement. At the commencement of the planting interest, about 1840, the upset price of these lands was five shillings per acre. Subsequently it was increased to, and still is, £1. On the day of sale, the applicant proceeds to Kandy, where the Government Agent, at the court-house, puts it up to public auction. If there are no bidders, the applicant has it at the upset price. If there are, he takes his chance in the bidding, along with others, until it is knocked down to the highest offer. Then, in addition to the cost of land, the purchaser has to pay cost of survey, cost of plans and title-deeds; a deposit of one-third of the purchase money has to be paid down, the balance within a month. Failing payment of the balance, or in event of the purchaser changing his mind, the deposit is forfeited, and the land lapses to the crown, again to be put up on the application of any one else. When the upset price of land was five shillings per acre it gave rise to a great deal of speculation. Parsis in Bombay, civilians of Bengal, and many others who had plenty of money, sent orders to agents in Ceylon to purchase frequently thousands of acres, which they had no intention of cultivating, but merely to hold and resell at a profit. In after years some made money in those blindfold speculations, and many lost. To the poor, industrious, and practical planter, this system had its drawbacks. Probably after years of honest labour he would save as much as would buy himself a piece of land. Those with money and no experience would

LAND-SALE ADVERTISEMENTS.

take advantage of this, attend the sale, on the principle that the applicant was a man of experience and knew what he was about, that, if it was worth so much to him, it was worth as much or more to them, and the original applicant, after all his trouble, frequently found, it had been of no avail, that some one with a longer purse had taken advantage of his experience and outbid him. However, as a rule, amongst neighbours and friends, one would not offer for his friend's application, that is to say if the friends were on friendly terms, which was not always the case. The intending purchaser, however, if resident near, had generally everything his own way. In former times, indeed, it frequently happened that he cut the boundaries of the land he required himself. So, with a gang of coolies supplied with axes and catties, he proceeded to the jungle and commenced to cut. He paid no respect to the straight lines, but cut out as his inclination desired, zigzag north, south, east, and west, avoiding what he considered bad or unsuitable land, and taking in all the best. When this was done, he reported to the Survey Office that he had cut a piece of land which he desired to be put up for sale, and, when convenient, a surveyor was sent out, who measured out and laid down on the plan the applicant's lot, which after being duly advertised in the *Government Gazette* was put up for sale.

It is the writer's opinion that the Ceylon Government have lost to themselves a great deal of money in the sale of their lands by neglecting or refusing to advertise in the local newspapers these land sales. Few of the general public read the *Gazette*, or even see it. I have known many instances where the first that was known of a portion of land having been sold was the statement of the purchaser that he had bought it at the upset price of £1 per acre, and I have frequently heard the remark, or remarks, "If I (or we) had only known, you would not have got it for £5!" The complaint of the public on this negligent system of advertising lands became so great that the editor of the *Observer*, with a laudable desire to oblige his readers, commenced to insert copies of these advertisements extracted from the *Government Gazette*, in his own paper, receiving nothing from Government for so doing. But he soon gave it up, as they declined to pay for the advertisements, and I have a distinct recollection of corresponding with the editor on this subject, my own view, at that time, being that he was wrong in giving it up, that, as a public journalist, it was his duty to give all and every information in his power to the general public, especially on such a very important matter as the sale of land, a matter on which the progress and

THE SURVEY DEPARTMENT.

prosperity of the Colony was so much dependent. His view of the case then was, that, while acknowledging the truth of the remark, still he did not see why he should advertise Government property for nothing, nor why his paper should be the means of putting money into the Treasury, while the authorities refused even to pay what, to them, considering the advantages they derived from the advertisement, was but a very paltry sum indeed. Quite right. Much to be said on both sides. There could be no doubt that Government lost money by not advertising in the local papers, and that the local papers displeased their readers by not inserting the land sales.

The loose system of intending purchasers of land cutting out their own boundaries at last became an intolerable abuse. The original purchaser of piece of a land, if he did not proceed to cultivate it, would sometimes discover that some one else had bought a portion of it, a second time, from the crown. The original boundaries would all have become overgrown, and any intending purchaser of an adjacent piece of land would, quite unwittingly, cut off a portion of his neighbour's, and so as he termed it make an encroachment. After a few years one would find his neighbours had built a bungalow or store on a corner of his patana, or had cut down and planted some of his best forest land. It even happened, and that much more frequently, that this would take place on crown lands. In the latter case, no very serious consequences would ensue, because, if it could be proved to have been done in ignorance, as of course it always was, the authorities were fair enough in always allowing the trespasser to purchase. The only risk the latter ran was at the public auction. If he had any enemies, they would probably bid him up, knowing that he must have the land at any price, or if he had an unfriendly neighbour, who thought the corner would fit in nicely into his own property; but these instances were exceptions. The system of purchasers cutting out their own boundaries at last began to give way, as the demand for land increased, it was found this sort of thing would not do. The surveys were not connected and would not connect, spaces of crown land were left between adjoining properties, which neither owner would buy, and which would be of no use to any outsider, and this, of course, was a dead loss to the crown. The Survey Department, with every wish to oblige purchasers, declined pledging themselves to give every man the exact portion of ground he desired. They went in for straight lines and connected surveys, they would not make any deviation in their work to please the purchas-

BOUNDARIES.

er, if there happened to be 100 acres of grass, or bare rock, or scrub ; nevertheless they were in general fair, just and reasonable, giving you as much of the land as they possibly could, which you wanted, to suit you, as the same time insisting on your taking with it a portion of unsuitable ground to suit themselves, which was just.

It has even been said, but I decline vouching for its truth, that upwards of thirty years ago some of the Government surveyors did not complete the cutting of the boundaries of lands they were ordered out to survey, but connected the boundaries and calculated the acreage *on paper*. This, of course, could be done in a somewhat approximate way by merely cutting one boundary on a scale, laying it down on paper, and on the same scale fitting in on paper or plan the other boundaries and then calculating the total amount. In fact, what has *not* been done in the old original days? Of this there can be no manner of doubt, that the Survey Department cost Government a great deal of time, trouble, and money, in putting to rights old plans and measurements, if they are even put to rights still ; for it may be even now, that a good many old properties, if put under the chain and theodolite in the hands of modern surveyors, would make their proprietors feel a little uncomfortable. The assistant surveyors, when out on their extensive surveys had a hard time of it. I have known many of them, and visited them in their talipot huts. It was about the hardest work, and apparently, to me, disagreeable occupation it was possible to conceive. Few who were kept at it for any long term of years were able to stand it. One of the hardest working men at it, a clever man at his work, and one who did good service in correcting and remodelling the surveys, about 1846-7-8, was Mr. Charles Wilson. He was popular with the planters and in favour with his superiors. What has become of him? Is he dead or alive, for he has long since left the island and the service? [Retired in 1864, and still draws a pension of £241 per annum.—ED.]

Most of the jungles are full of streams and small rivers of all sorts and sizes, and it was generally considered the best plan to take some of them as boundaries, in all cases where it could be conveniently adopted, because they were permanent ones. The jungle might grow and flourish to any extent, but still there was the stream boundary, it could not be choked up and obliterated. So the surveyor of the olden times, being pushed to get through with his work in order to proceed to some other locality, to meet some pressing

DISPUTED BOUNDARIES.

and urgent call for his services, would take a stream for one of his boundaries, and having chained up its course through the jungle, say, twenty, fifty, or a hundred chains, and finding that its course so far was all in one direction, would probably stop, making a memo, in his field-book of the course of the streams, which was connected or found on in his plans by this presumed course. Now, supposing this stream after this surveyor had taken his last sight, and departed, instead of running on the supposed course, suddenly took a sharp turn, or a round sweep, the result, in future altercations about boundaries, will be easily imagined, or, as was often the case, the stream divided itself into several branches, then the question would afterwards arise, which was the real stream, for all these mountain streams had names, and were known to the natives and native headmen by those names.

Two proprietors were once engaged felling large extents of forest; the sound of the axes waxed nearer and nearer, they were fast meeting in the small portion of forest left between them. In this small patch of forest one day the two proprietors met by mutual appointment. Says one of them, "What is the meaning of your encroachment upon my land?" The other replies by just asking his neighbour the very same question! "What!" says one, "I have 500 acres of reserve forest here." "Indeed!" says the other, "for I have or ought to have 600, and it seems there is barely from one to two hundred acres left between us. I have been working by the title-deed plan." "And so have I," says the other. Well, after some consultation, it was agreed to make a reference to the Surveyor General's Office, as to the rights and merits of the case; in due time a surveyor came up, and spent many days on a careful survey of all the localities, and the result was eventually declared that both proprietors had very considerably encroached upon crown land! Here, indeed, was a nice conclusion to their reference! a case of "out of the frying-pan and into the fire. And thus it was in general; if any one thought he was wronged in a small way by errors in boundaries or encroachments, better far to submit to it or settle by arbitration, than to have a re-survey. Once call in a regular surveyor to trace out old boundaries and settle disputes, who knows where it would end or what new features in the question it would open out! It might be that, while positively certain your neighbour had encroached on your land by five or ten acres, the result of the survey would convey to you the intelligence that you had

NATIVE EXCUSES.

encroached on his hundred acres, or that half of your coffee was crown land! Again, this sort of thing only needed a beginning, like the letting out of water. If one survey was wrong, even slightly so, the next survey taken, adjoining it, would be worse, because many of the surveyors, in cutting out lands, availed themselves of the boundaries cut by their predecessors, insofar as they were necessary to connect. Why, and justly why, should they go and cut and measure a new line when here was an old one cut by Mr. ———? The working surveyor, having discovered this fact, writes down to the Surveyor General's Office for a copy of Mr. ———'s plan of the land adjoining, which he receives. Perhaps there is some small error, of no great importance, in the copy plan received; at all events the working surveyor could not get his own lines to fit exactly on the copy, but the difference is so very slight as not to be worth bothering about, so he makes it fit. Perhaps before very long the plan that was made to fit is also in requisition, in order to join on another piece of land, and of course it will not fit either, and the difficulty of fitting is always increased as the surveys were extended. The reader can thus, without any difficulty, imagine how this sort of thing, from a small and trifling beginning, increased and extended.

The natives were always very much averse to land sales taking place in the vicinity of their villages. They had always some plea to offer why the land should not be sold. "It was temple land." "It was the hunting-ground of royalty." "It was necessary for cutting their timber or the grazing of their cattle." "It would stop or otherwise injure the supply of water for their rice fields."

As all these complaints, however frivolous, had to be considered, it was often no small trouble entailed upon the Government Agent of the district, to visit the localities, and report as to the truth or otherwise of the appeal. But even the favourable reports of the authorities in regard to land sales did not always satisfy the native mind. The writer was well acquainted with one of the surveyors who originally cut out the, or a portion of the, Pundaluoya lands, and has heard some anecdotes of those days in support of what he has said.

This surveyor had pitched his tent on some of the grass lands below Harrow Estate, the whole of the existing estates being then, of course, forest. He had had a weary toil and tramp from Pussellawa, as there were neither roads nor bridle paths. When he passed on, troops of natives came up in his rear, and sur-

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rounded him on all sides. They, however, offered no violence, but talked and bewailed and lamented as only natives can do. They would not go away, but surrounded his tent, after it was pitched. The next morning he commenced with theodolite and chain, but the natives stood in front of the former, and threw themselves down on the ground before the course of the latter, saying: "Pass over our bodies, our dead bodies, before you measure and sell the hunting-grounds of our forefathers." So, without any actual violence being used, the work was stopped, and the surveyor had to depart and report the state of affairs at head quarters. Does this feeling on the part of the Sinhalese still exist? I think not. They have been brought to see, and be aware, that the proximity of the white man, instead of being antagonistic, is quite the reverse, and that where the European fells forest, plants coffee, and flourishes, so also in some way or ways will they also flourish. I think they have been brought to see that the money and general prosperity brought in and caused by a settlement of planters is of much more permanent advantage to the native interests than the preservation of large tracts of forest, merely for the purpose of hunting down elk, deer, &c., for the sake of the dried flesh, or for the benefit of honey, the result of the labours of the bee hunter.

Of course where the native interests have benefited so largely from the influx of European enterprise, it is to be expected that some small counteracting evils, or rather inconveniences, will also exist. For it is quite true, the natives have a difficulty in procuring timber for their building and fencing purposes, that their cattle cannot be allowed to roam about untended, or they will trespass on the coffee estates, which they often do, and then be caught, tied up, and owners made to pay a fine, or damages, before the animals are released. But what are these but small drawbacks and petty troubles, as compared with other advantages realized? In my own opinion, one of the greatest evils natives are subjected to, in the vicinity of coffee estates, is one which I have never heard them state, although, no doubt, they are quite aware of it, and that is, the pollution of water by coffee pulp. As the native lands and villages are always in hollows and valleys, below the level of estates on the mountain ranges, they are liable to have their water not only all polluted but even eliminated and diverted and turned off from its original source. Of course, this has reference to watercourses diverting streams from their course, in order to supply power to the planter's machinery, or to wash his coffee. Thus water, upon which the native sets so much store, for the

RESERVATIONS.

cultivation of his rice fields, is sometimes cut off and sent down another stream. Has the question ever been asked, or proved, whether or not blackened, smelling pulp-water is beneficial or otherwise to the irrigation of rice fields? The reservation of forest for the use of natives used to be a somewhat sore subject, both to them and the planters. In calmly reviewing by-gone times, it seems to me, in many cases, Government were somewhat inconsistent in their general action in this matter. Take, for instance, the Peacock Hill, behind Pussellawa, originally completely covered with forest, and standing like some huge island completely surrounded on all sides by extensive rice fields, and a very numerous native population. One would naturally suppose, here is a fitting locality for at least some native reservation, instead of which the whole has long since passed into the hands of European proprietors; not a stick is left. And also, with regard to the great question of water, every river and stream descending from this hill must, in some measure, affect the numerous native residents around its base, and it cannot be called in question, that, during crop season, every one of those streams, more or less, is polluted with pulp. Not only during crop but for long after it is finished, the pulp slime will cling to rocks and stones in the beds of the rivers, so that it may fairly be questioned if the water in these streams ever is in a fit state to be used either by man or beast. In contrast to this, there is a considerable extent of chena ground, at the Sangilipalam, below Choisy estate, on the road to Pundaluloya. This is considered a fit subject for native reservation. On what grounds? There is no water on it: not a drop. The timber is merely a lot of brushwood; it can be of little use for the pasture of cattle, as the patches of grass-land are but few and scant. Since the Pundaluloya road was opened, as a matter of course a considerable number of natives have opened patches of coffee here. But whether or not the land belongs to them is a question, as also whether or not their title-deeds are correct, that is to say if they have any.

The real fact is, at all events, was, that the question as to the sale or otherwise of land rested in a great measure, in fact altogether, with the report or sanction of the Ratamahatmeya of the district. No matter how necessary any portion of ground was in or for the rights of the people, if the intending applicant had "the ear" of the Ratamahatmaya it was all right. It may be, the latter often passed his sanction to save himself trouble, to which all native minds are most decidedly adverse. For if the applicant was a persevering man, he would not submit to the simple negative of the headman. He

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would call for the personal inspection and report of the Government Agent for the district. To the headmen there was some risk of unpleasant results to themselves in this proceeding. For if the Agent found there was no just reason why the land should not be sold, the headmen would probably come in for a "wiggling," a severe reprimand for having needlessly caused all this trouble and expense in calling for a personal inspection from the Agent. Again, if the applicant was in favour with the headman, even although the application was needful for the use of adjacent villagers, there would be no difficulty in the matter. The Ratamahatmaya had merely to give his consent and recommend the sale. If this was known he would be a bold native man who would step in and make any obstacle ! They have too much respect for the powers that be to oppose them or it might be,—who knows?—the unpleasant results, that in many quiet ways might, and no doubt would, ensue from any such opposition. For amongst the inlying native villagers, it would not be said—Right was might. The saying was quite reversed : it was—Might is right, or rather shall be.

CHAPTER XXI.

AN OLD BUNGALOW UNDER EXAMINATION AND MADE TO TELL ITS OWN STORY.

Having in No. XVIII. of these writings given a promise, on some future occasion, to submit to your readers the dying confessions, or revelations, of an old bungalow, we will now proceed to fulfil the same, and keep clear of any further promises, as promises unperformed are apt to hang on the memory, and clog the pen while writing on other matters.

How can an old bungalow speak? There are various modes of speaking apart altogether from the actual power of speech, as generally understood. Speech may be disguised, and often is, so as to conceal the thoughts, and a sharp glance at the speaker will often at once determine the hearer that the truth is not spoken, and sometimes even that glance will convey a very correct idea of what is to be spoken, so that the truth of what is forthcoming is quite well known, before it is spoken. We would just appeal to the editor of the *Observer*. He must have had some feeling reminiscences on this subject. A "subscription" has been long overdue ; gentle reminders have been frequently tendered, until, at last, one more urgent than any of the others brings the defaulter into the "sanctum," and the dread "presence." The editor looks up, and

THE BUILDING.

after a searching glance is quite prepared to hear that the small affair will "meet with attention next month," and he has a tolerably correct idea that it will be forgotten, or rather unfulfilled. But, not to wander from the subject, and to put it briefly and concisely, an old bungalow can speak through the tongue or pen of one who has formerly inhabited its walls, or enjoyed the genial hospitalities of its owner, one who has known its history from the laying of the foundation-stone to the tumbling in of the roof. Yes, old bungalows can speak, and volumes might be written of what their silent and solemn ruins distinctly say. On returning from a snipe-shooting expedition on some of the rice stubbles, or as we call them paddy fields, tired, weary and thirsty, we suddenly find ourselves in the vicinity of the ruins of an old bungalow; the garden grounds around were rank with weeds and jungle, the roof had fallen in, and the posts and pillars stood up like ghosts. A buffalo was picking at the short green sward over-running what had once been a garden, and some cows were "chewing the cud" in what had once been the spacious verandah of the house. Getting under a grove of guava trees, which seemed to flourish amid the general desolation, and gathering, or rather knocking down some of the fine ripe fruits, proceeded to rest under their shade. While resting, we gazed at the remains of the old bungalow. Sad memories stole over the mind. The ghostly looking posts and pillars seemed to look sternly on us, as if in reproach, and the sighing of the wind through the pumalo trees seemed whisper forth words from the old bungalow. They were these:—"You who saw my birth, or beginning, have you come to see my end—end—end—ended now? Thirty years ago my present site was a pleasant grass expanse, commanding a fine view over the surrounding country, behind was a large track of jungle, out of which in the early morning, elephants, elk, pigs and many other animals used to come forth to crop the short grass or drink of the clear water collected in a pool close by. My first recollection of anything was a corner-stone popping up a few feet above the ground, and disclosed all around in a mass of confusion, great heaps of stones and sand lying about everywhere. My progress towards maturity was very slow, for there was always something going wrong. The master, after being away for a day or two, would return, and after inspection would declare all the work performed in his absence bad, ordering it to be pulled down again, and the pay of the car-

MASONS AND CARPENTERS.

penters and masons stopped. These gentlemen only gave a grim smile; they had received two months' wages in advance, and had their passage and expenses paid from Cochin. They were under an agreement, but found that if they could only get quite of this agreement, they could make a very considerably amount of wages more, elsewhere. It was quite apparent they wished to irritate and annoy their employer in order to procure a discharge and be set free. There were cases in court, and stoppages of work, a few days' drunkenness after receiving further advances of cash, and it would be endless to state all the detentions entailed on the work. One day there was no lime; another there was plenty of lime and no sand; the next, when both these articles were in abundance, there were no stones; so after having made a collection of stones, which was done by sending out gangs of coolies to collect and bring them in to the required spot, each cooly carrying a stone on his head, of course as small and light a one as he could conveniently find, often so small that he had to pretend it was very big and heavy, by putting both hands to his head to support a stone not the size of one of them, walking heavily as if in great distress, and at the working place letting it drop from his head with a sigh and groan, the expectant mason, standing ready waiting for the stone, hammer in hand, in order to dress it, gives it a slight knock and off it goes into two or three pieces, quite useless. The mason shoulders his hammer, takes a chew of betel, waiting the arrival of another stone. At last the masons would be ordered to stop work, until stones were collected. Surely now there were no obstacles. Why, matters were worse than ever. The coolies, having become disgusted with the work, had all run away during the night, so that there were none to pound lime, carry sand, supply the masons with stones, or the carpenters with timber, quite a gala time for them: in fact; all the work was at a stand for some indefinite period of time. A fresh supply of coolies having been procured, it was now difficult to collect the masons and carpenters, as having no work they had gone off somewhere. At last all were collected and ready to resume operations, when it was suddenly discovered that there was no lime. "Well," says the master, "we will soon settle that point. All hands to muster—fifty all told. Here are bags, away with you to the lime-kiln down the valley, and bring up half a bushel each." The journey to the lime-kiln and back would occupy the whole day; so, as afternoon set in, the gang would return with nothing!

REMOVING TIMBER.

no lime, stating the fire was out, no lime was burnt, and no one was to be seen at the kiln, no, not even the responsible burner. The wages of fifty men for one day lost, and, what was even more valuable, their work, besides the stoppage of work entailed upon all the artificers. Well, there is some timber ready at all events; the sawyers have reported "that beam" which we have been punishing them for as done. So the next day the coolies are despatched into the jungle for the piece of timber. In order to ease them in its transport, they slide it down a steep grass hill, where it caught on a rock, and broke into three pieces, and of course was utterly useless for the purpose required, notwithstanding which, the gang of coolies, under directions from the kangani, was divided into three, each carrying a piece of broken timber, which they triumphantly deposited in front of the timber shed. Another day's work lost! The piece of timber was of no use whatever.

Instructions were forthwith sent to the sawyers, who had a hut in the jungle, to saw another beam, with all expedition, the same as the one broken. The manager returned with the intelligence that there were no sawyers to be found, only a boy in the hut, in charge, who said they had gone to Kandy on some private business, and he did not know when they would be back. They had received an advance of ten pounds the day before, and it was just as likely, far more likely than otherwise, that they would never come back at all. However, they did, contrary to all expectation, and in course of time the missing beam was supplied. At last the roof was got on, always a great affair, for then the work can be gone about in all weather. It was *felt*, and nice tin spouts were put up to take off the run of water. It came on to rain, the felt leaked, and the spouts got choked up, and then were worse than useless; the water soaked into the walls, the plaster almost before it was well dried peeled and fell off, the constant leakage threatened to destroy the whole house. So the felt was all taken off, and a good coating of thatch put on; but thatch is a heavy roof, and the rafters were light, being made to support only light felt. The rafters bent, cracked, gave away, and the whole roof had to be removed. The bungalow floor began to shake on being walked over, until one day the foot of the owner suddenly went through it, throwing him clean down on the floor, and spraining his ankle. The floor then underwent a thorough inspection, and beams, joints, planking, etc., were found to be all in a rotten state of decay. The bulk of

A DIFFICULT WORK.

the timber was all of a species called "malabada." This timber is a very soft tree, growing abundantly in the forests; it is tall, straight, clean-grained, and handsome to look at, but on account of the softness of its fibre, and liability to rot, of no use whatever for any building purposes, or any purpose whatever, except firewood. Yes, it is also very often cut and split, for making pegs used in lining a projected coffee estate clearing. So the whole flooring had to be taken up, a brick kiln was set agoing, not far off, and in due time the floors were all laid with bricks.

Having given a few samples of the difficulties attending the erection of the old bungalow, we may just briefly remark that time, money, and perseverance, will accomplish a good deal, and so they did eventually complete a Ceylon bungalow, which, thirty years ago, was about the most difficult and tedious undertaking that could possibly be conceived, if indeed it *can* be conceived by any one who has not practically come through the ordeal, thirty or forty miles from Kandy, which was the nearest town where all necessary supplies could be got. The total want of all head and calculation of the head carpenters in charge may be shewn in a few given instances. Thus, at morning muster, the "baas" would present himself, state that they could not go to work, as there were no nails. The question would be indignantly asked: "Why did you not tell me this sooner? Not a few days before they were done, and they would have been here by this time." Coolies would be ordered off for nails. After an absence of three days, they would return, and the artificers set to work; after an hour or so there would be a general stoppage, and after a good deal of talk the explanation was forthcoming, that the nails were no use, they were either too short or too long. Of course a sample one had been sent, but the store-keeper, not having the exact size in stock, had sent the nearest approaching to it that he had, so the nails had all to be stowed away in store, and men again despatched for more. Well the glass panes may be put into the frames, at any rate. It was then found there was neither putty nor any materials for making it. What a pity the coolies are gone, but there is nothing for it, but to send off another. Until he comes back the glass can be fitted in with tacks, so the boxes of glass are brought out, and are all found, such as are unbroken, to be either of too small or too large a size for the frames. Then comes a regular measuring of the exact size required, and more coolies are despatched with the boxes of glass to get them exchanged. During the building of

CONTRACT WORK.

bungalows or stores, coolies were always on the road to and from Kandy, just because nothing was properly calculated for, or, if it was, the chances were the calculation in some way or other was wrong. A bolt, a screw, a hinge, or a ball of putty, had been, if not forgotten, omitted to be given in. It may almost be said, and said truly, that a bungalow of the olden times never was completed, because, no sooner was the work done, than constant alterations and periodical repairs became necessary. When the bungalow was, say habitable, the occupant would look round, and decide on a place and site for stables, cattle-shed, poultry-house. To save time and trouble, these buildings would probably be given out to some contractor, who promised to settle them up in very little time. Well, the sum is agreed upon, the risk is all the contractor's, so the master need not trouble looking after the work. And so it was, wooden posts to support the building were put into the ground, about the size and bulk of what the rafters ought to have been, the rafters themselves were merely large *varrichchus* (wattles), and the wattles in some instances, the large rank stalks of mana grass, put three or four together, and tied across the rafters with coir rope: or, if not, some light suckling succulent underwood, perhaps not so good. There was plenty of mana grass for thatch, all round about, so that was soon done, and the buildings were roofed. After the rains set in and the thatch got heavy with wet, it would become quite apparent that the whole framework of the building was insufficient to support the roof; the side posts and walls presented a curved and wavy appearance, as if they had not or could not make up their minds whether to tumble down inside or outside; the roof itself would present the appearance of an inverted bow, so that the water, instead of running off, lodged half-way down, soaked through the grass, poured down into the building, where it stood in pools, or ran off in a series of small rivulets. The cattle were driven out to save them from the wet, for they could easily obtain, on natural instinct, a much more suitable shelter, under the lee of some rock or belt of jungle, than what our lively and intelligent building contractor had provided for them. Indeed it was hardly safe to keep them in the shed, the roof might fall in; but what if it did, they could easily shake themselves free of it, without a scratch! The writer has known some of this description of sheds blown down during the night, the roof lying flat as the ground, but the cattle had without much exertion pushed their heads through the flattened roof, and were quietly and com-

THE ESTATE BLACKSMITH.

fortably grazing about, without a scratch, as if nothing had occurred. It was perfectly evident the outhouses would all require to be renewed, and having learned from experience no more contractors were engaged, although, when it became known the buildings were blown down, the applications were numerous, and amongst them the original contractor! Masons were engaged to put up stone pillars, instead of wooden posts, the posts themselves made tolerable rafters, and the rafters were converted into wattles. No sooner were the outhouses considered to have been finished and put in thorough repair, than something again was wrong with the bungalow. Indeed it was never safe to discharge masons, or carpenters, for one never knew when their services would be immediately and urgently required. Some even went the length of keeping a blacksmith, at a wage of some £4 to £5 per month, and there seemed pretty constant employment for him, or rather he managed that. The blacksmith's forge was a very primitive affair: all he required was some rough cheap shed to shelter him from the weather; in the centre of the shed he would make a hole in the ground for the fire, a pair of bellows would be so placed, worked by the action of the hand, as to blow into this hole, and it just lay along the ground. The hole itself was filled with charcoal, which the bellows kept in a red glow, but, almost always, the blacksmith would demand and receive the services of a boy to blow the bellows, while he himself sat on his "hunkers," sat down upon nothing, doing nothing. No, I am wrong, he was chewing betel. The blacksmith used to pretend to be very particular about the quality of this charcoal, so much so, that he had to go himself with a cooly to procure it, for it was far beneath his dignity to carry charcoal, so he used to proceed out into the clearing in search of charcoal, and was very fond of getting as near the sides of the jungle as possible, into which he would suddenly disappear, and remain for a long period of time. There was no good charcoal in the clearing, and he had been looking out for a suitable tree, to cut down and burn, but, on these charcoal expeditions, it was a curious fact that he always carried a gun with him, and a good many shots were frequently heard, when the blacksmith was away looking for timber to burn charcoal, and on his return, before he emptied his bag of charcoal, which was pretty full, he took it into the dark interior of the shed, which served as his room, and, when he did empty the bag, it contained very little charcoal, so that it served him very little time. It was quite evident the blacksmith was a sportsman, and

AFTER CHARCOAL !

his game was not charcoal. However, a little work, or some occasionally, was better than none at all, and we winked at the sporting blacksmith, or at all events until some important and pressing work was done, as, if we had boldly and valiantly taxed him with his sporting propensities, he would have left at once, for, as a matter of course, he had no pay due to him. The blacksmith, however, was not so very barefaced as to admit going out shooting during working hours. There were plenty of elephants in the jungle, he took his gun as a protection. We asked to examine the gun, and took the liberty of drawing the charge, asking our friend if he was so daring as to shoot elephants with small shots? In fact we plainly told him it was an impossibility. But he had, as usual, a ready reply, which was "he had a bullet in his pocket to put in, over the shot, when he saw the elephant."

Estimates and specifications of timber were quite unknown; orders were given out by the sawyers to cut what was wanted for immediate requirement, but it frequently happened that the posts and pillars would be altered, either raised or lowered, from the original intention, so that the wood sawn to order was either too short or too long: if the former, it was useless, and had to be cut over again; if the latter, of course it was cut to the required length, but the pieces so cut off were just so much waste in labour, money, and time, in cost of transport, as, when sawn off, they were of no use at all, but, as they had been ordered, so they must be paid for. It was the same way with rough buildings of jungle timber. Coolies were sent out into the forest to cut sticks. Of course they did not collect them of too heavy a material, or too long, so that the *débris* or masses of rejected timber lying about a newly-erected shed would amount to, or represent, a frightful quantity of useless work, useless to the owner, but they would serve the coolies for firewood for many a day. They, in collecting refuse timber for firewood, about the carpenters' shed, would sometimes, it may be in ignorance, and without any dishonest intent, purloin some valuable pieces of wood, in course of preparation for some necessary portion of a building, or at all events so mutilate it with the hacking of their firewood axe as to render it completely useless for the purpose required, and we used to caution our coolies, under severe pains and penalties, to keep at a good distance from our timber shed! This was a difficult order to keep in force, for the precincts of a timber or carpenter's shed were ever abundant in all kinds of chips, shavings and refuse, and surely it was a

STORE BUILDING.

very innocent thing to pick up and carry away what was of no use to any one, and of great use to the coolies in lighting their fires. Fancy coolies cutting up for firewood timber that had cost 18s. or 20s. per 100 feet to saw, besides, in most cases, the great cost of transporting it from the saw-pit to the shed! As in a previous chapter we have written on the want of estimates in cultivating an estate, and the evils resulting from the system; in like manner, although on a smaller scale, were the losses arising from want of all calculation in the preparation of timber. It was just the same with masonry: the pillars would be ordered to a certain height, then the master would change his mind, and order them a foot lower, or higher; this on a casual glance, would seem no great extra trouble or expense, but what did it involve? Why, just that the whole calculations of length of timber were wrong, and that all of the rafters, beam or joints were either too long or too short. If a plan of a building is once made, stick to it, if possible. Once commence any change you know not where it may end.

CHAPTER XXII.

STORE ERECTION, LIKE BUNGALOW BUILDING, A WORK OF DISAPPOINTMENT AND DELAY.

Having in the last chapter given some rambling recollections of the troubles attending the erection of a bungalow, I may add it was just the same in putting up stores and pulping-houses, no matter what calculations the master might make. He might commence operations, apparently, with abundance of time before him, quite sure that everything would be complete before crop commenced, but, if anything was certain on the subject, the certainty was, or rather proved to be, that he was most certainly wrong. We would appeal to some of our old planting friends of those times. We would put the question, "Did any one, during the lengthened period of any practical experience, ever know a store and pulping-house to be thoroughly completed in time for crop?" We will even go much further than this, "Completely finished, so that no carpenter or mason was required to finish off any of the works, in time for receiving a second crop?" "There was always something to do, or what was more probable, something to be undone, and done over again. Many readers will doubtless recollect, how, when crop began to come in, artificers were discharged with the understanding that the work was to be resumed after the coffee was gathered and despatched.

We well recollect being once well-nigh driven frantic. The coffee was all ripe on the trees, and still the carpenters were hammering away in the pulping-house. We told them picking was commenced, and, if the hammering was not finished in the cherry-loft, we would most certainly commence and hammer upon them, which threat seemed to have a more satisfactory result than any of stoppage of pay, or dismissal from service. Indeed the latter was no threat at all, for they would at once get employment over the way, where a friend and neighbour was even in worse plight than ourselves. At noon the cherry coffee was brought into the cherry-loft, just as the carpenter had given his last stroke, and was now busy fumbling in his waist-cloth, from which he drew forth a tin box, which he opened, took out something, and put it into his mouth. Any new comer would suppose he had made some mistake, for, shortly after doing this, he would spit out a red sort of substance all over the floor, somewhat of the colour of the cherry coffee, and which shewed forth in bright contrast on the clean newly-laid down planking. In case any of our readers may never have seen, or heard of, this proceeding, for their information we will merely remark, the carpenter had taken a chew of betel leaf, to compose his mind, after the unwonted and extraordinary exertions he had undergone? The cherry-loft, of course, was all covered with chips of wood, shavings, nails, and carpenters' tools, so, a speedy clearance having been made of all these, by means of a broom, a clear space was at last obtained on which to measure in the cherry coffee. We are impatient to get the pulper set agoing merely to see how it will work, for many parts of it had just arrived from Kandy, where it had undergone general repairs, especially the cylinder, which had a new sheet of copper, well-set teeth, without a flaw. At last all was ready: the wheel slowly revolved, and the pulper was in motion. Everything seemed in very fair condition, and we are making close examinations, as to any little faults or defects, for subsequent remedy, when a grating crushing sound strikes the ear, a sound especially abhorrent to the planter's ears, crash-cr-cr-r-crac-ac-rash! There's a stone in the cylinder! The master rushes to the spill-water rope, in doing so knocking some over into the washing cistern, and another flat on his face on the platform. He frantically jerks the rope, and the machinery comes to a stand.

Then comes a searching investigation. In spite of every precaution, a nail had got into the cherry coffee, and with it had entered the pulper, and the fine newly-covered cylinder is all ripped up and destroyed.

“Finish off the pulping,” says the master in disgust. “Get it done any way.” Then the cylinder is taken off, four men ordered to shoulder it off to Kandy for a new covering, having probably not pulped over fifty bushels. In course of time, coolies’ time of course, the cylinder is brought back, put in position, and found all right, crop operations being again resumed, but the wonderful feature in the case which now turns up is that the coffee is fearfully cut. The chops are set, reset, tried this way and that, tried in every way, but still the fact is apparent, that a great amount of coffee is cut, or rather the ends of the bean ripped off as if they had been bitten. What can it be? The planter in desperation throws off his coat, rolls up his shirt sleeves, and orders all the pulper to be taken to pieces. He then found that the nail which had destroyed the cylinder had been caught in the chop, in which it had made an indented mark, which had caused the coffee beans passing through to present the appearance above stated. The chop is taken off and a cooly despatched with it to Kandy, for refacing. As this process can be done in a very short time, the picking was allowed to go on as usual, until the whole cherry-loft was chokeful, so that, when the chop arrived, which it speedily did, there was plenty of work for it to perform. Once more the pulper is set agoing, a cooly brings a basket full of pulp and spreads it out on the floor, in front of the planter; he thoroughly examines it: it is all right, fine whole pieces of pulp taken clean off, and not the slightest signs of any cut parchment, not even a small bean. A basket of the cleanest coffee is then brought and spread out before him on the pulping platform, which he carefully examines. He commences to count out indiscriminately one hundred of the beans, carefully examining each before putting it aside, and finds that out of every hundred, on an average, there may be one injured by the pulper; this he calls one per cent damage; nothing could be fairer than this: one, two, or even three per cent of cutting is not much out of the way, especially as, after the machine has been some time in use, the harsh roughness of the new teeth or indentations on the cylinder will have become smoothed down, and ultimately the percentage of cutting will doubtless be further reduced to something merely nominal or at all events confined to a few of the biggest beans. So the planter proceeds to the spout, washes his hands and arms, and dries them by using the tail of his coat as a towel. He then puts on his coat and stands partially in the sun, in order to get this article of clothing dried; in its turn he puts his hand in the

MORE ACCIDENTS.

pocket and draws forth a tobacco box and pipe, sends off a cooly for a fire-stick, sits down on an inverted bucket, and gives a sigh of satisfaction. The pulper is working beautifully. Having completed his smoke, he feels half a mind to have another look. Really there is nothing to do, but, before doing so, he gets up to have a look how the cistern is filling. He gazes into the receiving cistern, and to his astonishment there is nothing in it; he looks at his watch and finds the pulper has been steadily working for nearly an hour. This is very strange; where is the coffee? He gives a more searching glance and sees the coffee pouring out of the spout into the cistern, it continues its way in a small stream through and across, where it disappears through a small door which opens into the washing cistern. He walks along the edge of the receiving cistern, and looks into the washing one, and the stream of coffee is running right down its centre, and out at a door at the bottom from thence into the drain, and from the drain into the river below, into the *ganga* beyond redemption, taking the transport question into its own hands, saving all cost and charges.

There is little to explain in the explanation. During the hurry, bustle and scurry of setting the pulper, it had been forgotten or neglected to shut the doors of the receiving and washing cisterns before the pulper was set agoing. Some old gunny-bags were at once thrown up against the doors, to prevent any further wastage, and a search made as to the whereabouts of the doors, but they were not to be found. As it was supposed they had gone down the stream, like the water-wheel buckets. No great anxiety was felt, as, if they were never recovered, the carpenters would soon supply new ones, and they would finish the pulping.

It was a fine bright day, and some gleanings of coffee which had been picked before the pulper was ready were laid out on the drying-ground to dry in the cherry; this required no attention at all on the part of the stormeen, or, even if it did, they had been too busily engaged with the pulper to mind anything at all about it; when there was a sudden cry, that nearly all this had been swept over the embankment, into the wheel-pit drain. The missing doors of the cisterns were not far away: they had choked up the escape leading from the washing cisterns, and in consequence the barbecue, or drying-ground, was all flooded with water. This was soon put all to rights. The cistern doors were placed in their proper place, and the water resumed its way in the water-course, and the pulping was done. "Dear me," says the

HOW TO MEET DIFFICULTIES.

master, wiping his brow with an old handkerchief, "if this sort of thing is to go on, it will drive me mad. I am thankful it's all over, for this day, at all events, but it won't go on." Probably next day there will be some more vexatious repetitions of annoyances, on a more trifling scale, but being boldly and promptly met they will gradually become fewer and farther between, until the machinery day after day is set agoing and stopped, without one disagreeable incident to mar the temper of the planter.

It is often well for the peace of mind of our human race, that we are in ignorance of events which are taking place. The waste of a few bushels of coffee going down a drain, in the setting of a pulper, would be neither here nor there, in the reckoning up a crop; if we take the waste and loss from many other causes, not so immediately passing under our notice, it is as nothing. Suppose the absent proprietor seated at his club, in London, reclining on one chair, and his legs resting on another, reading *The Times* (not the *Ceylon Times*). He is studying the produce market article, and gives a hem of satisfaction on perceiving that coffee is "up 2/ and in good demand." He is in great good humour, and is under the impression that "coffee is not such a bad thing after all." Mr. Pulpem is really a hard-working man, and—and—he has never asked for any increase of pay, and visions, perhaps only phantoms, of an increase of £50 are passing through his mind, just at the very moment, when in a different portion of the globe, Mr. Pulpem has discovered that the doors of his cisterns have been left open!—On the other hand, we will suppose Mr. Pulpem, after the events of the day, or days, as above described, proceeding to his bungalow, very down in the month, and disgusted with himself—and generally not in a very happy or self-satisfied state of mind. He finds the overland mail has come in and in a letter, either directly from the P. D. or more likely through the Colombo agency, is informed that his "screw" is increased another fifty pounds. He sort of feels overwhelmed, as if he did not deserve it, he is thankful and grateful. "Well; but if they only knew?" Well, what about it if they did? It was not your fault; you did your best and met the difficulties, and, if you had not, it would have been far worse. Lucky for the proprietor that you are the man you are, and not only fit to cope with difficulties, but quite capable of overcoming them. Never forget the maxim, that difficulties disappear when promptly and boldly met. Difficulty is a great coward and bully. Give in to him, acknowledge his power and supremacy, and you are done

COFFEE AND TOAST.

for, you are his slave for life. "Very difficult," Can't do," is only language fit for a coolie, not for a European, at all events for one born on British soil. Face Difficulty, take him by the beard, give him a good tussle, and take my word for it, you will soon see his back. He may return, but at him again, he gets weaker and weaker after every defeat, until at last the giant Difficulty finds that it is no use meddling any more with that stubborn fellow, and you have it all your own way. "I *will* do it" will accomplish most things that are capable of being accomplished, ay, and a good many too that the faint-hearted consider impracticabilities.

Mr. Pulpem, during the remainder of the evening, is in a happy frame of mind, all his troubles are (he thinks) over, he goes early to bed, and sleeps soundly, rather longer than usual, for, when he gets up, and comes out into the sitting-room, without having put on his coat, and, shall we mention it, without his stockings, or slippers, he finds, contrary to use and wont, that he has not to bawl out, "Boy! bring coffee," for coffee is on the table, waiting his time. This tended to keep up his good humour, for there is nothing that tends more to irritate an active planter than when he comes forth in the morning, and finds no signs of the boy, in fact that he is up before him; it results in the choice of two evils, either to go away without his coffee and toast, or to wait until it is ready. So our friend pours out his coffee, and his satisfaction continues, when he find that it really is hot.

Mr. Pulpem is drinking his coffee, and completing his morning toilet at alternate intervals; having finished the latter, he sits down to have another cup, comfortably, when, on looking up, he sees two store coolies in the verandah. The writer, from past painful personal experiences, was always prepared for some bad news, on seeing store coolies in the verandah, before muster time. What brings them there? Simply to break some bad news to master, before he comes out, so that in some measure to prepare him, before he personally sees it, and has a sudden outbreak on the whole lot, a note of preparation: it breaks the force and suddenness of the blast, he has in some measure time to consider and cool over the bad news, before he reaches the store. But perhaps this view does not enter into calculation of the store cooly at all; very likely it is just an impulse, an idea under which they always act, to run and tell master. After that it takes all responsibility off *them*, and perhaps this latter idea has more to do in calling them into promptitude of action than anything else!

Mr. Pulpem stops drinking his coffee, and mechanic-

COFFEE DOWN THE STREAM.

ally puts on his coat, stockings, and shoes, having an innate perception that his presence is required at the store without delay; he steps out into the verandah, and, under the full conviction that something is wrong, he asks, "What is wrong?" If nothing had been wrong, these coolies would not have been there. He would never have dreamed of going out, and asking "What is right?"—or, "Of course you have come to tell me that everything is all right." The question is briefly answered, "The cistern has burst during the night, and the coffee is all down the stream!"

Our practical planting friends will have a very good idea how this happened, but, for the benefit of others, we will explain. The receiving cistern was twelve feet long, and from three to four feet deep, bottom and sides constructed of planks two inches or two and a half in thickness, fastened with nails on perpendicular small wooden posts. Owing to the work having been behind-hand, this cistern was put into immediate use, as soon as it was finished. Now, newly pulped, unwashed coffee, with all the gum or saccharine matter on it, is a heavy dead weight, and the pressure on the sides of the cistern is very great, so great, that often, on well-ried, well-seasoned ones, the side planks may be observed swayed out, as if ready to give way, and require some temporary support to keep them all right. Under this explanation, it can easily be conceived what the effect would likely be in having a newly constructed cistern, all at once, for the first time in use, filled up to the very top, chokeful, with this coffee. The planking had not time to swell out, and settle down in its grooves and niches, the newly-driven nails were not rusted, or hardened in their position. The dead weight and pressure from within swayed out the planks, these in their turn acted as a lever on the newly-driven nails, which slightly gave way. This merely tended to increase the bulging out of the side planks, until they burst asunder, then the slimy unwashed coffee smoothly glided out, if we may use the expression, seeking its way down, wherever that down led, just on the same principle as the bursting of water from a reservoir, only that the action and motion of the unwashed coffee had not nearly the same velocity.

It is an old saying, "Misfortunes never come alone," they follow each other in natural succession, as the waves of the sea, the real truth being, that one, the original, if not promptly and speedily checked, causes the other, and this other another, and so on. Thus, the bursting of the receiving cistern was caused by a small nail getting between the chop and the cylinder: an original act so small and trifling, that had it been

“SMALL NAILS.”

known and remedied in time, it would have caused little inconvenience or stoppage of work; the nail damaged the cylinder and chop, and the detention caused, in getting these repaired, was the means of filling the cherry-loft with ripe coffee which had to be pulled off and at once, whenever the machinery was put to rights. Had the pulper worked properly from the very first, the early gatherings and pulpings would have been small, and no preassure on the sides of the receiving cistern. These, having had time to swell out and consolidate, would gradually have got settled in position, and the nails rusted in. So the daily gradual increase of gathered coffee would slowly and steadily prepare the cistern for any after weight or burden it would have to undergo. Reader, whoever you are, look out for a small nail; it is just the old Scotch proverb, “A stitch in time saves nine.” Few there are, if any at all, in any position in life, who could not, if they chose to take the trouble, trace back through a long series of years, a long course of troubles, to their very source, till they come to the original, a small nail. What is your small nail? It may be you will have to go back on the memories of twenty, forty, or fifty years ago, through a long series of unhappy, unfortunate, and untoward events. Look, as far as you can, and surely you will find the small nail! In a former chapter we have likened an old planter to an old pulper. And so, in like manner now, we would liken the act of pulping to life itself. Few there are who start all right, and pulp all right, till the *evening closes*. Many are so busily engaged in making money, that they utterly neglect the art of keeping it, after it is made; these are they who forgot to close the doors of their cisterns,—all that they earn and save runs down the back drain; others again become merely money-making machines. They pulp away, and fill their coffers, the receiving cisterns, until they are chokeful, then when the pulping of life is over, and the shadows of evening are lengthening, some morning they suddenly wake up to find it has all gone down the drain. The receiving cistern—some bank, some company, or bubble scheme—has swayed and burst.

It has just dawned upon our recollection, that we have omitted to mention another system of drying coffee, which has now almost, if not altogether, gone out of use. It was called “Clerihew's Patent.” About the latter end of the Forties, Mr. Clerihew (now deceased) was resident manager on Rahatungoda Estate, Upper Hewaheta. He invented a system, and patented it (although I think there was some after discussion, that the principle was not a new one,

CLERIHUE'S PATENT.

and that he was not entitled to a patent for it) for drying coffee, without exposing it on mats to the sun at all. It was : make your store, as far as possible, air tight ; instead of plank flooring, lay down on the joists, battens, say 2 inches \times $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches apart ; over this place coir matting ; underneath the lower floor the ground was all well hollowed out. A pair of light plate-iron fanners were inserted in the wall at the end of the store, and at the other end a furnace was constructed, from which large iron pipes led into the store. This furnace was so constructed, that all the smoke went up a chimney, and the heat from it was drawn into the store through the iron pipes, a suction or draft of air being caused by the revolutions of the fans at the other end. For this purpose, the pulping-house was formed from the end section of the store, so that store and pulping-house were just one building. The fans were in a wooden frame, built into the wall, immediately behind the water-wheel ; they were driven by means of a connecting band on a large drum attached to the wheel, and on a smaller one fixed on the axle of the fanners. The fanners at one end, and the furnace at the other, caused a current of heated air to pass through the store. The Colombo coffee curers did not like this system ; they said, and I believe truly, that the silver skin never would come off, and the samples of coffee were quite spoilt. The writer once built and worked a store and pulping-house on this principle, and certainly was disappointed in the result. Mr. Clerihew himself called occasionally and gave personal instruction. All air from without was carefully excluded, light was admitted by means of glass windows. The roof, which was iron, and so of course not air-tight, was ceiled in, bungalow-fashion, with strong ceiling cloth, over which was washed a good coating of glue and rice kanji. It succeeded in drying to a slight extent coffee, when spread out thin, but the question is, Would the coffee spread out thin on the coir matting not have dried equally well, without the fans and furnace ? for there was no very perceptible draft. It was only just perceptible, and we used often to try it, by smoking a pipe inside the store ; if we were near the fanners, the smoke would move slowly towards them, but from the centre of the store, or at the far end, near the furnace, there was no perceptible draft of the smoke : indeed sometimes to our great disgust, especially when shewing off the results to a visitor, the smoke would move off the other way ! on seeing which our visitor would break out into a loud guffaw, stating, as his opinion, tha

HOW TO DRY COFFEE.

the fire at the other end was drawing in all the damp wet air from the pulping-house, and not the fans drawing in the heated air from the store. Clerihew's Patent never *took*. The modern system of building stores, so as to allow of a free ventilation of air throughout, by means of fixed open venetian blinds, sloping downwards to prevent the drifting in of rain, is now in general use, it being considered better to have a thorough passage of air, even although it may be damp, than having no air at all, or the hot steamy atmosphere produced by Clerihew's patent. Are there any of such extant or still in use? We have not heard of them for a long time.

It is curious no improvement has ever been attempted on Clerihew's original idea (if it was one). An idea has just occurred to myself, which may be open to consideration, especially as it would involve no very great expense in adapting stores, as at present constructed, to suit it. It is this:—Lay down on the ground floor of the store, about six inches apart, metal pipes, say six or eight inches in diameter: perhaps the ordinary galvanized spouting, well soldered up, would do. On the top of these pipes, which, if strong enough, might even serve as joints, lay the plate iron or wire netting. At one end of the store have a furnace and large boiler from which the pipes would be constantly kept full of hot water; the pipes would be plugged up, at the far end from the boiler. The heat arising from the hot water in the pipes would communicate itself to the plate iron or wire floor, which would speedily dry wet coffee spread out upon it, or even cure that in a more advanced stage. The store would not at all require to be boxed up, or air-tight. Indeed I am not sure but a small detached cheap shed erected on this principle close to the pulping-house, into or upon which the wet coffee could be thrown, would be a better plan than making any alterations in stores. Any sort of shed would do, so that it would be little expense; the chief cost would be the pipes, boiler, and building of the furnace, and chimney stalk.

Here is an idea! Can any one improve upon it? There can be no doubt as to the correctness of the principle, for, on passing along the passages of some of our public buildings in the old country, on a cold winter evening, heated by hot air pipes or water, it has sometimes struck us, on passing over the perforated escape air-holes, here is heat enough to dry any amount of wet coffee. Now if such a vast amount of heat rushes up through an iron perforated air-hole, of about one foot square, what would it be if the whole floor was filled with them, or was made of perforated zinc?

“ LINES.”

The principle is an old well-established one, and we may yet live to see the day when, in talking or writing of stores and pulping-houses, this heading will include another item, and will be written thus : “ Stores, pulping-houses and drying-sheds.” What do some of my old planting friends think of this “ notion ” ? The very wet crop seasons which have of late prevailed should have some effect in turning the attention of planters to the subject, especially during present high prices, when so much attention is given by purchasers to *colour*. Coffee must deteriorate in colour, by being kept for days, often weeks, quite wet. In my own experience, coffee always presented the finest colour, the colour highest in estimation by the London broker, when it was taken straight from the washing cistern, out to the mats, exposed to the sun, and dried thoroughly, so that the parchment cracked, and the silver skin became started and quite loose ; but, as we cannot command sunshine, we must try a substitute, and that substitute I herewith respectfully submit to the consideration and *discussion* of my planting friends.

CHAPTER XXIII.

WHY COOLY HABITATIONS ARE CALLED “ LINES.”

Why is house accommodation for coolies called “ lines ” ? What is the original definition of the word ? We never exactly knew how it was first designated by this term, only, from the earliest planting days up to the present time, such has it been called, and I suppose most planters, if asked the question, would feel somewhat at a loss for a definite and prompt reply. In the times of which we write, any sort of house accommodation was considered good enough for a cooly, and they never complained : very different from present times, for how often is the excuse now preferred, for men not proceeding to an estate, that, the “ lines ” are bad, although we have a tolerable correct idea, that, when an excuse of this sort is offered, it is merely cooly politeness, and, were they to speak the truth, that truth would be either that they did not like the locality of the estate, or some contingent probability of hard work in new clearings ; possibly the master himself was no favourite. In fact “ The lines were bad ” was a very convenient excuse and just simply meant to infer that for some or another known only to themselves, or which they wished to keep to themselves, they would not engage on the estate. They are not singular in this respect. Many

HOW COOLIES BUILD.

a time, on meeting with and transacting business with others, we never could get a solid reason for some apparently unreasonable proceeding, or course of action, some trifling subterfuge, which indeed we would have been very green to have swallowed, was offered as a tangible or apparent excuse. We thought upon the old saying so often drilled into the ears, until at last it became as much dreaded an expression as "No rice," "The lines are bad," which just means, "We don't want to engage with you." If a gang of coolies take a fancy to yourself or estate, you are full-handed, with lines well packed, and not wishing to hurt their feelings tell them you have "no lines," or the "lines are bad," they will soon speedily volunteer to remedy this defect. Give them a few days and they will build lines, or will thatch in an open verandah. The corner of a cattle shed, the store, or pulping-house, will do very well, until something is settled. Being sometimes pushed for labor at other works, we have taken on coolies, on the understanding that they were to build their own lines, please themselves and not blame us afterwards, they of course receiving pay during any reasonable time they took at the work. But these eventually proved to be the most expensive buildings that could have been erected. The coolies would proceed into the jungle, and look out for young trees, or branches, where a forking branch sprung out at a proper distance; this would be cut down and carried away, as a corner post, the fork at the top answering for the reception of the cross beam or ridge-pole, and thus doing away with all necessity for a carpenter, with his adze and chisel; four forked posts to support the wall-plates, and two for the ridge-pole, rafters tied on with jungle rope; thatch, mana grass, which being a far way off and it being the month of February, fine clear dry weather, they adopted a somewhat novel system of thatching. In the adjacent jungles they collected large quantities of twigs covered with leaves, chiefly nilu, or any branches that were thick in leaf, carried them in bundles to the new lines, and thatched them. So long as the leaves and twigs remained green this answered very well in keeping out the cold, or night dews, but they soon curled up and dried with the heat of the sun, but when the holes in the roof got very bad they were just re-covered with more green stuff. They were at last driven out of this habitation when the April rains set in, as this sort of roofing is no protection against rain. Then we would send for grass to cover the roof, under the weight of which the posts and rafters would give way, so that we were obliged to do what should have been done at first, put up a new

OLD-FASHIONED HUTS.

set of lines, and have nothing more to do with allowing the people to build their own. However, these old lines, with patching and repairs, a post here, and a prop there, would oft n last a wonderfully long time ; they always seemed to be just on the eve of tumbling down, but never did, the coolies seemed to take to them, and, when we built better ones to look at, the old ones were unsightly hovels. And as always around them the coffee trees were very luxuriant, they certainly did seem a disgrace to the estate, at all events spoilt the appearance of it. Now we don't mean to say that the ordinary old-fashioned cooly huts did this—quite the contrary. We were and still are of opinion that the old-fashioned mud-and-wattle walls, thatched roof, &c., if well built, and kept clean, had a much more domestic, comfortable, homely look than the modern ones of stone walls, shingle roof, and verandah posts of sawn timber. So it was not the old-fashioned huts, it was the dilapidated tumble-down appearance they sometimes presented, with the roof thoroughly blackened with smoke. A thatched roof for any inhabited building is in many ways the most comfortable for the inmate: during hot weather, it is the coolest roofing you can have ; and during wet, the most comfortable, provided it does not leak, because the rain descends upon it without any noise: in fact sitting inside so far as noise is concerned you never know when it rains. Quite the reverse with shingles, tiles, or any other hard roofing, the spattering dashing noise made by the heavy fall of rain on which is frequently a great annoyance. But thatched roofs are now rarely in use ; although they are comfortable ones, they require constant renewal, and thus, although comparatively cheap at first, during a course of years, are the most expensive that could be used, besides danger from fire. Many of our readers must recollect how cool and comfortable they felt in getting under a thatched roof, during a hot day ; as compared to what it would have been, had the roofing been of other material. But, in olden and modern times, it has ever been found, if practicable, that it is much better, in many ways and for many reasons, to have several small ranges of lines, in different localities, than to have one large set ; the latter, however, is comparatively cheaper in cost. A large set of lines is generally never so healthy, simply because its general surroundings are not so easily kept clean. Then, where a large number of people are congregated, there are generally quarrels ; coolies from the same parts of the coast and of the same caste, should have, if in sufficient numbers, lines to themselves, care being taken that they do not over-crowd, for rather than mix

SANITARY MEASURES.

in with others, members of the same gang will pack into one room, until it is positively unwholesome, while perhaps, in the adjoining room, one or two will be found by themselves, but they are a different set ; hence the packing in amongst their own people.

We heard an expression the other day, that the craze of the age was "sanitary measures." We thought of the packing and crowding of coolies in huts, how they never at all events asked for medicines, and certainly how few the death cases were ; most decidedly, sickness was not so general or rather prevalent amongst gangs as it is now.* We provide stone walls, tile and shingle roof, plank doors actually on hinges, instead of the portable grass one, and we provide medicine chests. Now, we by no means imply any satire or contempt for the comfort of the cooly, quite the reverse, but we mean to assert that sanitary measures and sanitary reform does not always bring about or effect what it gives out. It is the same way in this country : dirt sometimes seems healthy ! The healthiest parts of Edinburgh, at least where the mortality is lowest, are the dirtiest most confined portions of the town, where the working people are packed and crowded, where there is least air, and no pure air at all ! We met with a man the other day, in very poor health ; he had a great aversion to dirt in any shape, and gave out that he washed or bathed his whole body daily, and he would just as soon go out without washing his face as go without his general bath. "Well," says another, "what better are you of it ? Look at some of these strong fellows working close by ; let's ask them about it. Hard dirty work you are at : we suppose you take a good bath when you go home, after the day's toil." He paused, rested his foot on his spade. "Na, na," says he, "least whiles on a Saturday night I'll wash my feet, and, if its vera warm i' the summer time, take two or three rubs down in the burn." So that here was a case in which dirt was healthy and cleanliness the reverse, but very likely this case would not apply in a warm tropical country. With regard to personal cleanliness, although we ourselves have seen very dirty coolies in just as robust health as others who regularly bathed and washed, there can be no doubt that when disease does get amongst dirt it is apt to linger and become worse ; but that dirt causes disease is doubtful, as a rule.

We have been in the resident management of some estates where it was determined to make the coolies

* For once we must pronounce our correspondent utterly in the wrong. Does he not remember the dreadful times of 1847-49 ?—ED.

A SMOKY ATMOSPHERE.

very comfortable in respect to roomy house accommodation. Expense was not spared, large and very commodious lines were erected, store walls, shingle roofs, doors and door frames, with locks and bolts. Four or six men were located in a room 20 feet by 16. After some time, on making a visit of inspection, to our surprise and disgust we found that these men whom we supposed had been made so very comfortable in this modern erection had, inside this spacious room, erected small huts! So they had stripped the bark off some large dñ tree, cut in lengths of four or five feet, in breadth four to six inches. With these pieces of bark they had constructed small rooms, or huts, inside the large room of the original building : in fact, quite a small village inside the room. Sticks were laid longitudinally across the floor and five feet above it, and the strips of bark erected against it, and tied to them small passages were barked in, and off these were the huts, with a hole left to creep in ; through this hole two or three men would creep into their bark hut, where all was utter darkness, except from the glowing embers of a fire on the floor ; they would just be of sufficient length to allow the cooly to lie down at full stretch, and the breadth would be as much as to allow for a fire and cooking utensils—before which he would sit down on his hind legs en,joying the smoke, of which there was an abundant quantity. We are of opinion this love for a smoky atmosphere must in some measure, if not altogether, cause what most people with general knowledge of the cooly character must have observed, that is, to use their own expression, “Can’t see in the dark.” Very like an Irish observation, but we must explain that it means a total want of all visual perception after nightfall, or at all events very indistinct as compared with ours, and so it happens, that if necessity requires that they be called out of their huts to proceed to execute any instructions, or any journey however short, even to the bungalow, how rarely it is you see one man come, always two or three in company, and we have sometimes been not a little amused, perhaps irritated, at being disturbed at the bungalow, after nightfall, by the arrival of three or four men in great form, in front of the house. One stands forth, and says in a few words briefly: “The pulping is finished all right.” The other two or three stand in the background until the speaker has done, and received the brief reply: “All right.” The speaker then falls back into the main body, and they all walk off together, as they arrived. Now the lines were quite a short distance off, and there was nothing to have hindered the responsible spokesman from

NIGHT VISITS OF COOLIES.

taking a run to the bungalow and back by himself, but they don't like going out in the dark alone. It may be also some undefined fear or dread of evil spirits, a something which cannot well be expressed, a feeling not altogether confined to coolies, but which is generally allied to ignorance, a fear of something in the dark of they don't know what. Again, in the early part of the night, when they would be visiting from one set of huts to another, much to our alarm during the dry season, for fear of fire, they would have a lighted firestick waving about in the hand, from which the wind would blow sparks all round. This could quite well be understood as a necessity during a very dark cloudy night, but it was very often just the same during a bright clear full moon, when there could be no manner of doubt that they would have seen very much better without the fire-stick or torch-light at all. During a dark night while sitting in our verandah we have often seen a bright red spot far away in the murky black. On calling the servant to ask what it could be, he would gaze in consternation, and firmly pronounce it to be some devil or evil spirit, something that boded us no good, and beseechingly implore the master not to look at it. After ordering him off as a fool, we would proceed to take observations. The light, being a good distance off, seemed stationary. But having drawn a chair and sat down in a position so that the verandah post was between us and the light, so as to obscure it completely, in a very short time the light would slowly appear: it was then, of course, perfectly evident in what direction it was proceeding, as, although, from its distance, we did not see it moving, yet the verandah post was stationary. We would then set another fixed mark against the light, until we had a very correct idea where it had come from, and where it was going, as also our own surmises what it was going to do. The next day we would roundly tax some of the inhabitants of one set of lines, with visiting another during unseasonable hours of the night, which they could not deny.

But their curiosity used to be great as to who could have told, when we used quietly to affirm we had the gift of second sight, which in many cases was believed! A quick observant master, keeping his own thoughts secret and putting "this and that together," could sometimes manage to pump out a good deal of what was going on, having joined a few connecting links, and then boldly taxing the coolies with the conclusion he had mentally come to, would very frequently bring out the truth.

These old-fashioned huts sometimes took fire, indeed

LINES ON FIRE.

the wonder was, they did not do so oftener; if they were of any age, nothing would save them, because the stick walls would have become a sort of touch-wood. They would sometimes be on fire for days and nobody know it! Thus, the cooly would light his cooking fire against the wall, some of the outside mud-plaster having crumbled off, one of the rotten wall posts would catch slightly, it would glow and spread, communicating itself to others, without being noticed, it might simmer in the wall this way for days until it got the thatch, when the whole building, of course, would burst out into a blaze, and speedily be consumed. One night we were awakened by a loud chattering of coolies in the lines; this being nothing unusual, we were just putting the pillow over the head, instead of below it, in order to deaden the sound, when the bed-room seemed in a lurid glow: there was a glass window and no shutters. Starting up and looking out of the verandah we saw a bright stream of light shooting up into the darkness. There could be no doubt on the subject, a large set of lines, one hundred feet by thirty, was on fire! It did not take long to dress and be on the spot. Too late. The fire had caught in the thatch, it roared and crackled, the blackened rafters were tumbling in, there was no hope, it must burn out, and take care it does not catch on the coffee. There was upwards of one hundred men in the lines, who were running about round the burning building, shouting and screaming, but *doing nothing*. The sight brought forcibly to mind our boyish experiences, at home, in the burning of a wasps' bink. Of course no clue was ever obtained as to the origin of the fire, but it was a long time before we heard the end of its final result! Did one ask another for that small debt due, "how could he when he had lost all his money in the fire?" The women must have an advance of wages to buy bracelets, for had they not lost all their jewellery in the fire? Touchingly and with many tears the dusky beauty would spread out her bare arms, which used to be hidden under a load of armlets and bracelets, all gone. We were tender-hearted, and knew the weakness of the ladies in favour of jewellery, and gave as an advance of wages, the sum required to purchase more, and were rewarded with a flood of thanks as the "protector of the poor." But next day, on passing along the road, we met our fair friend, off on some excursion, loaded with jewellery, a walking shop, and, strange to say, the identical ornaments that had been lost in the fire! The exclamation came out: "Glad to see you have found your ornaments, so you had better return that little balance." A toss of the head, a laugh, and a rush past, was

COOLY GARDENS.

all the answer. We had been done. Never mind, it will be recovered some time : put it down in the advance-book.

We used always to encourage coolies in cultivating small gardens about the lines. Some superintendents do not allow them, on the plea that they are so unsightly, and also nurseries for weeds, which in many cases is quite the case, because the cooly has no idea of order or neatness. Any little waste portion of ground would be fenced in, no matter how. Upright sticks of all lengths and sizes, outside planks, even brushwood, would be heaped up around ; of course, these fences were in general nurseries for weeds, in which they came to seed, tall and rank, and from which they cast their seeds amongst the coffee. Then it was all very well so long as they cultivated these small patches of ground, but from various causes they would sometimes be temporarily abandoned : the owner might have taken a lazy fit : he might have left the estate sick, or from some other causes ceased attending to his small patch of ground, the weeds would spring up into a perfect nursery—in which case we very often (of course, after due warning of what would be the result, if the punctual weeding of the gardens was not attended to) pull up the fences and burn up all the weeds, and issue an edict against any more gardens, but after a while some industrious fellow would petition that he might be allowed to cultivate a small garden. We would be firm at first and say no, but our friend would persevere. “He was quite a different man from any one else, and would never allow a weed to be seen,” and so we would eventually give consent after a short time, merely to have a repetition of the old story. These small gardens sometimes led to a good deal of quarrelling amongst themselves in respect to paltry thefts, one stealing vegetables from the other. This was of course referred to master, who might be put to his wits’ end to decide, as to who stole a pumpkin, which after all perhaps was not stolen at all, but had been secretly cut by the proper owner during the night, made up into curry and eaten, and a charge made to master next day against his enemy, who he declared had stolen it. “And was it not perfectly true, for here were witnesses who had, along with himself, seen the skins of the vegetable lying behind the door,” which skins had been secretly placed there by his accused himself early in the morning before any one was up. We have some times been very much annoyed at their pumpkin plants. This is a quick-growing creeper or runner with large leaves, which soon seeks out and verruns everything in its way ; it will run up the

NOTICES TO LEAVE.

lines and spread all over the thatch, looking very picturesque in its way, but eventually rotting all the thatch. It will send out runners into the coffee and completely cover up and smother a number of coffee trees, the somewhat ludicrous sight sometimes presenting itself of a large round pumpkin as big as one's head growing, or rather seeming to grow, on the top of a coffee bush. We would then, as in the case of the gardens, make a raid on the pumpkins, and commence tearing them up, or off the coffee, the owner sometimes looking on speechlessly sad ; at other times, with a loud wail, he or she would come rushing up, prostrate themselves in front, and entreat " the protector of the poor," " the friend of the miserable," to have compassion, and spare that pumpkin, and they would be careful, and there would be no more complaints, they would keep their garden properly, which they did until the next complaint. Another inducement for us to bear with the coolies in their gardens was, we found it was generally the industrious hard-working useful fellows that had them. After working hours, and on a Sunday, instead of going about idling their time, and getting into all sorts of mischief, they would be quietly working in their small patches of garden. Besides, it was a sure sign, when a cooly took to gardening, that he was satisfied with the master and estate, and intended remaining in the employment. When about the time of giving notice to leave the estate, we used to have a good idea of who were going or staying, by the condition of the small gardens. It used to be a very common practice, and maybe still is, for coolies to give false notices to leave. A day or two after they were paid up, or off, they would come up to the bungalow, and give in their names to remain : they were not going. This notice to leave proceeded from various reasons : first, they had their wages paid up, and thus had more money in hand to deal with as they thought fit. Again, after having been paid off, they would find that some of their debtors could not pay up that little sum due them, and therefore they could not go. We always knew very well if the cooly continued to work and keep his garden that he was not going away, even although he had given notice that he was ; and on the other hand, if we saw some gardens getting out of order, weedy, and in an abandoned state, we had a very correct idea that the owner was intending to leave, even although he had neither given notice nor said anything at all about it. We used sometimes to be very much put about with these notices to leave : nearly the whole labour force on the estate would give notice ; arrangements would be successfully entered into to fill up

their place with other gangs. Then, after they were paid off according to their notice, none would go, but declare they all intended remaining, and so we would find ourselves with a double labour supply. Not much of this sort of thing I should think, during present times !

The cooly is a social animal : as a rule, he does not care for or appreciate what we call domestic privacy, not but that they like having a room to themselves or their own set, but no amount of noise or chattering amongst their neighbours in adjoining rooms seems to annoy them : they rather like it. Suppose a room 10 or 12 feet square is allotted to a man, his wife, and a couple of children, one would be apt to fancy there was no spare space left, but before very long he will have erected in one corner a sort of cage, with sticks, in which, during the night, will be confined a few head of poultry ; in another corner will be tied up a pet goat, or sheep ; in the third a nasty, ugly, barking dog will be fastened up ; outside, in the verandah, a pig may be lying, and also, in some cases, a small cow. They say that in Ireland the cow and pig sometimes inhabit the same room as its human occupant, but the coolies are rarely so bad as this. They always were very fond of keeping pigs, so long as the master wished or took no notice about keeping them up, until the pigs became too numerous and mischievous, when we would issue an order that all pigs seen running about the lines and coffee would be shot. This order the cooly would probably take no notice of. He reasoned, and very likely with some measure of truth, that master was too kind and considerate ; it was only a threat, a threat that often before had been threatened, but never put into execution. He presumed, as they always do, upon former forgiveness : hence the importance of always keeping your word with the cooly, Take care what you say, or how you issue an order if you are not firmly determined to act up to it. In a moment of great irritation, on finding a pig had wandered up to our very bungalow, and grubbing away amongst the attempt at flowers in front of the house, we would seize hold of a gun, and lay the invader low. We were not to blame : we had often given forth warning, notwithstanding which a pang of remorse would seize us as we sorrowfully surveyed the poor fellows carrying off the carcass, without a word of complaint, probably with an apology, which just increased our self-reproach, that the pig had, unknown to them, broken out of its sty. The plan we subsequently adopted is the best : never allow coolies to keep pigs, or at all events, unless the master builds proper pig-sties, they will not do so. A very good plan is for an estate to

VEGETABLE SEEDS FOR COOLIES.

build sties and even feed the pigs, and for this eventually the value of manure obtained will in course of time more than return the expenditure incurred. We used always to discourage pigs, and encourage gardens; a great help and incitement to the latter was procuring garden seeds. Often, when personally working in the bungalow garden, in the cool of the evening, with a packet of seeds which had just come out fresh from England, would a passing cooly stand and look, others would be attracted, until quite a group would be collecting at the extreme novelty of master working, actually doing cooly work; then they would volunteer to do it for us, and persistently hold out the hand for a rake or hoe. Sometimes we would humour them and sometimes not; in either case it would generally end in a modest requisition for some cabbage seeds, which was always granted, or, if they were too respectful to ask, we could easily guess by the longing eye cast upon the packets of seeds what the heart desired; a few packets of seeds would be opened, a pinch of several sorts placed into some white paper and into the hands of the cooly, and he would depart in high glee, and set to work at once, at the lines, to prepare a small garden. The news would spread; next evening the group around our garden fence would be a numerous one, we would be overwhelmed with offers of work. We could not get to work: our polite coolies would not submit to this sort of thing. "Master working! Chi, chi, we will do it," until at last, after having learnt the store set upon seeds, we would order far more than our personal requirements, in order to distribute to them; nor were they ungrateful, for if their seeds grew and flourished, which they frequently did, while ours came to nothing, they would present master with the best vegetables of their growth. The cooly is not such a bad fellow after all, if one knows how and when to humour him. Once gain their confidence and respect and it will take a good deal before you lose it, if ever. Yes, amongst the numerous classes of labourers in this wide world there are many much worse and far more difficult to deal with than "Ramaswami."

CHAPTER XXIV.

COMING TO CEYLON ON THE CHANCE OF GETTING WHAT
ONE WAS WORTH: IF WORTH THEN TO GET
NOTHING.

Mr. James Jimson landed in Ceylon in January, 1845. He was sixteen years of age, and by his parents in the old country was consigned to a proprietor, who

MR. JIMSON.

had commenced coffee planting without any agreement at all, but on the simple understanding that the young man was to be employed, and receive as a salary just what his employer considered him to be worth, and, if he was worth nothing at all, the understanding was still to hold good ! Mr. Jimson was a spirited lad, glad to obtain an entry into the land of coffee and rupees on any terms. He was at once packed off to reside on a small clearing in the jungle with one who was some months his senior on the estate. The house accommodation for the two was a room about twelve feet square, mud floor and walls unplastered or washed, a bed, a couch, a table, and two chairs. The boxes of the occupants which contained their clothing were stowed away under the bed and couch ; one big box stood in the verandah, close to the door, and served very well as a servant's table, if indeed the servant was worthy of the name, for he was merely a low-caste cooly taken out of the lines, who could cook nothing but curry and rice : but what matter, when there was nothing else to cook ! It may be superfluous to add that the curry and rice was cooked cooly fashion. Mr. Jimson slept on the couch, and his senior in the bed. There was not sufficient room for the two to perform their morning toilet at the same time. So the senior at once assumed the privilege of seniority, and always made his junior get up first : this was sometimes rather a difficult task, but the pewter water-goglet and basin, which had been in use in the cabin on board ship, now did duty in his jungle cabin. It stood at hand, and Mr. Jimson soon learned, from practical experience, that, if he failed to respond to the shout of his senior at half-past-five to get up, the contents of the pewter water-goglet would speedily be discharged all over his head and shoulders. One evening slyly, before turning in, he, unknown to his senior, emptied the water out of the goglet on the floor, and again set it in its place. Next morning, in response to the usual shout he merely turned and exposed his shoulders in a very tempting way, for the usual deluge. As usual, the water-jug was seized and found to be empty, but our senior was not to be done, and without a moment's hesitation both jug and basin were thrown at the bare head and shoulders of Mr. Jimson, one following the other, in quick succession. The pewter basin and jug were indented by the force of the blow, and so also were Mr. Jimson's head and shoulders, but ever after that eventful morning he always got up when he was called, until, before very long, he needed no calling at all. So that, we may say, this was a successful attempt in his training. No need of this sort of thing now. Had the hero of our tale lived

MUSTER AT THE LINES.

in the present day, he would have his own boy, who would have been duly cautioned the night before to wake master in proper time, so that, instead of getting a rap on the head with a pewter basin, he gets off with a rap at the door.

In those times, a very bad system was much in use of going to the lines to muster coolies. If the lines were scattered or detached, one superintendent would proceed to one or two sets, and another or the conductor to the rest. The results were that the coolies never thought of turning out until the master presented himself, check-roll under his arm. If it rained he would get under cover of the lines' verandah, or a kangani would do himself the honour of holding the umbrella over master's head and the roll while it was being called, in consideration for which the kangani would think he was entitled to creep into his hut, for some indefinite period of time, or at all events until the rain ceased. Even after the master presented himself in front of the lines, shouting out "*Vâ, vâ!*" ("Come, come!") it would produce no immediate result further than a few heads peeping out of a hole, serving as door and window, when a glimpse would be had, of two hands and a mouth stuffed full of cold rice. After this water would be thrown out of the doors; this was a sign of some hope—the rice was finished, and they were washing t eir chatties (earthen pots.) The kanganies would then come out, completing their toilet in a great hurry, which consisted in rolling an immense quantity of red cloth round their heads, until it finally assumed the aspect of a turban. They would now join the master in the shout of "*Vâ vâ !*" until at last a few men would appear in the verandah "girding up their loins" with some rolls of cloth, that had once been white, but it would be difficult now to pronounce what the colour was! The kanganies would rest their chins upon a long stick (we never knew a kangani without one: they seem to consider it as a sort of official badge), gazing with an earnest look into the doors of the lines, as if they expected some, or all, to respond to the call and come out; but they did n't. As the kangani was now abused and urged by the master, "it was getting late," he would, stick in hand, make a sudden plunge into the rooms, from which would speedily emerge a number of men, women, and boys, putting one very much in mind of rabbits turned out of their holes by means of a ferret!

We have said this plan of mustering at the lines was bad: it was so in many ways. Thus, of course, the master returned to his bungalow, with the check-roll, or more probably to have his coffee and *roti*, and no sooner was he turned round the corner, than a num-

KANGANIES' PRESENTS.

ber of coolies would probably "take a leaf out of his book," and return to their rooms. "Where ignorance is bliss" &c., the unconscious master being under the impression they were hard at work weeding, and that he need not be in any hurry, he would just take another pipe. Bad in another way, because the people never thought of moving out until the master presented himself, so that, if he happened to be late, or oversleep his usual time, they did not move at all. "Master had not come." "They never were called." And again, after the roll was called, and a number of absentees marked absent, the distribution to the different works arranged, the delinquents would emerge from the dark holes, hurriedly washing the hands and mouth, and request their names might be put down, which was generally done, but the doing of which of course required an alteration in the field-book and check-roll.

One day, after work was done, Mr. Jimson brought in a bullock's horn: a beautiful horn it was, with a fine round curve; he had been admiring it, in the possession of the kangani, and that functionary, having a keen eye to business, seeing that the heart of the *sinna durai* was captivated by the horn, and with the inward firm assurance that he would ultimately get ten times the value of it out of master, the kangani in a mild humble manner begged the favor of its acceptance as a present. Mr. Jimson was enchanted. What a capital fellow this kangani must be! He had yet to learn what presents from kanganies meant: he had forgotten his Latin, "*Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.*" So Mr. Jimson sat in the verandah polishing and rubbing the horn; he bored a hole at the tip, and began to practice blowing on it, until he was quite a proficient in that art. Now his senior did not at all like this sort of thing: it disturbed him, bothered him in reading, and doing up accounts. But a thought seemed suddenly to strike him. "Jimson," says he, "what a capital thing that would be to turn out the coolies of a morning; it would save a deal of trouble; it would save us going to the lines." Mr. Jimson brightened up: an idea flashed through his mind that it would save himself an immensity of botheration, if the coolies would respond to the horn: it would save him going to the lines, it would give him half an hour longer in bed in the morning, it would—in fact what would it not save him? He quickly responded: "Just the very thing. First rate, and it will do for leaving off work. Blow it at four o'clock, it will be heard all over the estate." "Just so," said his senior; "and in order that the coolies may be impressed with the dignity due to the horn, it is only to be used for the purpose

BLOWING THE HORN.

herewith arranged, and as it will be necessary to blow two horns, or twice in the morning, the first as a sort of warning to prepare, you will have to get up^sat a little before five, an hour sooner, in order to sound the first blast. Of course you can turn in again after the first horn, but take care you don't go to sleep and be too late for the second." Our friend's heart sank. Why, this was worse than ever: instead of getting up at a quarter to six, it was now an hour sooner.

But the plan did not seem to answer. The coolies declared they never heard the first horn, very likely on the principle of the old Scotch proverb, "There's nane so deaf as them that wiinna hear." So the senior issued a fresh order. Just a little way in front of the bungalow was a small round knoll or rising ground, about fifty yards off. Without consulting the junior at all, it was arranged that at five in the morning he should proceed to the top of this knoll and blow the first horn. Now this rising ground was inside the coffee, and any one who has had any experience knows full well what it is to walk through coffee trees early in the morning with the night's dew still on, or, it may be, after nocturnal rains. One may just as well walk through a pool of water. Of course our friend was often late, he would look at his watch and find the hands had a good deal passed the dead hour of five, it was nearer six. What if the senior should awake and call out, as he had often done before, "I say, Jimson, what o'clock is it." So he makes a rush for it in shirt, trousers and slippers. On his return he was as wet as if he had tumbled into the river. There was nothing for it, but to put on dry clothes, which was no sooner done, than it was time to go out again to muster the people, after which he returned to the bungalow, evidently very much in need of a third change. "Jimson, it's time you were off," but there was no response. The senior turns round and sees him bending on his chair; his hands are over his face, drops are seen trickling through his fingers. Can it be possible! or is it only the wet trickling down from the rain-soaked hair. In scarcely audible tones he is heard to murmur: "This is coffee planting: what a wretched life. If she saw me now what would my mother think."

The senior was touched, he knew what was the matter, for he had come through it all himself, and, although now he was seared and hardened, yet still he respected Jimson's feelings and went out into the verandah, in order to leave him alone. He knew his young friend would have several repeated attacks and relapses of this complaint, but that they would gradu-

BEWARE OF "HORNS."

ally become weaker, and at longer intervals, until they wore themselves out. The best way was to say nothing, but leave him alone. All attempt at consolation, sympathy, or even laughter at the "softness of the spoon," just makes matters worse : take no notice of him. The senior in an off-hand matter-of-fact sort of way says, "I wish you would stay in this forenoon, and copy off those accounts, give me your field-book. I am going out myself to look after the work." He does not care a straw about the rain, he prefers it, it is nice and cool and much more healthy than walking about in the sun.

On coming in to breakfast at ten o'clock, he found Mr. Jimson with a bright countenance, he had just finished the accounts and writing, and, on being complimented on the neatness and correctness of his work, he actually laughed and said he could do better than that, if he was in proper trim. Now, if he had been allowed to go out in the wet and rain in the humour he was in the morning, no saying how long the fit might have lasted, it might have become chronic and eventually incapacitated him from progress in his calling. Respect should be had for the great change of life to which young men newly arrived are subjected, and they should not all of a sudden be urged to go in for the burden and heat of the day, unless as is very frequently the case they are urgent for it themselves. Only take care this respect is not carried too far, so as to induce habits of indolence and sloth ; this may just as easily be done, perhaps easier, as excess of discipline in the other direction, in making an assistant get up at five in the morning and go out in the wet rain to blow a horn.

Beware of horns ! Take care, when you are polishing up a horn in the verandah, that it does not subsequently become an unpleasant infliction. Take care when you polish off a horn under the same circumstances that it does not inflict itself upon you in the early morning. A very pleasant occupation or relaxation is polishing up or off horns in the verandah. Whether in a hard or liquid state, beware of horns !

In due course of time Mr. Jimson got through his troubles, and as he had promise of having the stuff of a good planter in him, he was promoted to the charge of a separate division. He had the gift of the gab. Before many months were over, he could talk away in Tamil like any cooly, this gift was sometimes an annoyance to him, as he used to be considerably in requisition to act as interpreter.

It was also bad in another way ; he became a great gossip. He talked with the coolies ; and knew everything that was going on on all the neighbouring

A QUEER VISITOR.

estates; he knew everything that was going on on his own; knew occurrences that would have been better, infinitely better, had he not known them—in fact his propensity for cooly news became a sort of craze. On visiting a neighbour on a Saturday evening, the next morning he would be up early, and down about the store or lines, talking with the coolies; he would find out all about their pay, rice, &c., and perhaps give a quiet hint that the estate where he was gave better. He would question them and find out all about their private family matters; in fact, what did he not find out? When this, after a time, became known, Mr. Jimson received very few invitations; and eventually none at all, but he would not take a hint. He invited himself, and went, asked or not, until at last a neighbour whom he constantly visited on a Saturday evening to stay over Sunday, on seeing his head hopping up and down amongst the coffee trees, on the path to the bungalow, would run out by the back-door, and hurriedly tell his servant, he was off to his next neighbour to dine and sleep. Just then Mr. Jimson would step in in front and receive the information: "Master gone and not coming back till to-morrow," but Mr. Jimson did not take the quiet hint to be gone also. Oh! no, he was not going. He was going to dine, "anything would do for him," he would stay all night, and perhaps the master would be back before he left to-morrow evening. So his dinner was served, and, having nobody to talk to, he retired early to bed, took his absent host's bedroom and bed, as they were larger and more comfortable than the small stranger's room, with its little camp bed. He was an early riser, and, although it is Sunday, was up before six, bawling out for coffee and toast; much to the disgust of the inhabitants of the kitchen, who, naturally enough, in the absence of their master, hoped to have had an extra hour's rest. Our visitor, having finished his morning coffee, began to suspect he would have a rather dull day, so he goes into the office and inspects the check-roll, and at a brief glance is aware of the number of coolies on the estate, the rates of pay, and charges for rice, &c., all of which he makes a mental note of. Having received this small whet to his curiosity he examines the pigeon-holes, looks over the duplicate cart-notes, and notes the hire of rice and coffee. Really he is obtaining a great deal of information. He now observes a bunch of keys on a corner of the office table. The host had departed so suddenly the evening before, he had forgotten to put them in his pocket; he takes them up and tries a drawer, which gives way, and discloses to his admiring eyes lots of private

A NEW EXPERIENCE.

letters and papers spread open out on a file, so he had merely to turn over the leaves as he would those of a book, in order to read them all easily and with despatch. But he was not unobserved : the servant had perhaps a hint from his master : at all events he was busy with a long broom sweeping the lobby and verandah, a very usual circumstance with him, on a Sunday morning, when master was absent. He was so intent on sweeping that none would ever suspect he was watching, but he was, and saw everything that was going on. The servant stops his sweeping and stands looking in behind the door, which opened considerably from its frame on the wide-set hinges. Now a good Tamil servant is always particularly zealous in his master's cause and for his interest during his absence ; so he makes a great noise and bustle in the passage, and by the time Mr. Jimson has shut and locked the drawers he steps into the room and states his master had sent him a cooly express with instructions to find and forward his keys which had been left lying about somewhere, and would he assist him in looking for them. So our visitor commenced to rummage all over the room, and strange to say could find no bunch of keys ! "Your master must be mistaken," says he. Replies the servant very sharply : "Master forget very soon. After master read all the papers in the top drawer, you shut and lay the keys below this newspaper," at the same time stepping up to a small round table, removing a paper, and taking up the keys. He says never another word, but leaves the room with the keys. The visitor thinks it was time he was leaving also ! So he left and never said he was gone, never even said : "Don't cook any breakfast." He did not go back to that bungalow again.

Mr. Jimson's employer had occasion to leave the island for a few months, so it was arranged that he was to live in his bungalow during the period of his absence, and see that everything was all right. The keys of the store-rooms and cellars were deposited with him, on the understanding, that, if any of his employer's friends "came the way," they were to receive all hospitable reception, and be entertained in the usual way. When this circumstance became known, Mr. Jimson suddenly found he was becoming a very popular fellow. He had a great number of visitors, and, from entertaining his employer's friends, he commenced to entertain his own, at the expense of his employer : in fact all the stores, solid and liquid, began to go very fast. The keys would be left in the doors or lying about, and the servants, thinking they had just as good a right to help themselves and entertain their friends as the *sinna*

"ALL DONE."

durai, did so, whenever they had an opportunity, which was pretty often. It would happen so, while Mr. Jimson and his friends were at dinner, he would say: "Boy, bring out a bottle of wine. Here are the keys." So the boy would take the key, proceed to the store-room, which was just along the passage, so that those sitting at the dinner-table could see him quite well: *he* could not steal anything without being observed, oh no! The servant would take the key, smartly unlock the door, and just as smartly and sharply bring out *two* bottles: one with a sharp turn behind his back he would hand to the kitchen cooly, who was standing in the passage, waiting his duties, with a towel over his arm, and this towel very promptly received the bottle! The whole transaction was done in an instant. There was no stoppage or delay in proceeding into the room with the other bottle, which was supposed to be the only one brought out. This sort of thing, going on day after day, would soon tell on the contents of any cellar, however largely stocked, and so it was, that when Mr. Jimson was advised of the speedy return of the proprietor, and when he examined the cellar, as compared with the stock-book, what had become of all its contents? Surely he could never have used so much? When his employer arrived, he put out a small stock of wine into the side-board, went back to his old bungalow, and took the keys with him, which was just prolonging the arrival of the evil day. Mr. Jimson's employer was a gentleman of very considerable position and standing, and, after his long absence, a number of his friends came to see him, and of course he entertained them at dinner. One day, or rather evening, at dinner, the employer says: "We must have a bottle of champagne. Mr. Jimson, you have the keys, go and bring it." But the keys had been left at the other bungalow. This sort of thing went on for a week or so. The keys were always forgotten. At last, in anticipation of a social dinner on a grander scale than usual, such positive orders were given about the keys that it was impossible to evade them. After dinner the host said to his guests: "Come, we will have a glass of rare old port, the like of which we won't get often. There were two dozen left, when I went away. Jimson, bring out a couple of bottles." But Jimson made no signs of a movement; he got very red in the face. "Come, look smart and bring them out." There was a hollow response: "There's none. All done." The host and guests looked each other in blank amazement, and echoed: "All done! Well we

POISONED BY ARSENIC.

will have some champagne. I am quite certain there was a dozen or two of that, in the back corner, it must be in fine drinking order now. Bring out two bottles on trial." As before, the response was: "All done." The host, from being amused, now began to shew considerable signs of irritation, and said: "If we can't have any wine we will have a glass of grog all round, on a meeting of friends. "Boy, bring in the hot water, a lemon, and the sugar. Jimson, bring out a bottle of brandy, or perhaps some of you would prefer whisky toddy, a bottle of whisky—or stay: better bring both and you can please yourselves." No need to say: "Stay," for Mr. Jimson had never moved, and shewed no signs of moving. His response, as before, was: "All done." Matters, or rather exposures, had now become so serious, that the guests said it was time to go, and they went, and the resident told Jimson he intended having a complete overhaul of everything to-morrow, and would certainly call upon him to give an account of all unreasonable shortcomings in the bungalow stores. After this Mr. Jimson went to his own bungalow. The result of the complete overhaul and examination of the store, room, after what has been written, can easily be imagined, so we need not further enlarge on the subject. One evening, just at dusk, Mr. Jimson arrived at his senior's bungalow; he went straight to the couch, lay down, and said: "It's all over now: my troubles are over; I've swallowed a dose of arsenic." A thought flashed through the senior's brain: "He will die here, there will be an examination, arsenic will be discovered in his stomach." He looked up to a shelf on which were a number of cooly medicine bottles, and standing amongst them was a round bottle labelled "Arsenic. POISONS." He had had a serious quarrel with Jimson a few days before, and this was well-known, it was well-known that on account of the foolish talking propensities of the junior they were mostly always quarrelling. What could be that every natural inference drawn from Jimson dead in his bungalow, a *post-mortem* examination verdict "poisoned by arsenic," and a bottle of that poison standing, half-empty on the shelf! Many a one had been hanged on less evidence, hanged: and just then visions of three Sinhalese murderers rose up in remembrance, whom last week the senior had seen hanged on the grass flat between the lake and Bogambara Mills, Kandy. What if their fate should be his! The idea was intolerable; he started up, got hold of a piece of tape, went into the pantry, cut a small piece of fat off a cold joint of meat, tied it to the end of the tape, rounded it off into a small ball; he then took Jimson by the

shoulders, and said: "Swallow this," which he did, then the tape was slowly pulled up, and the result was, a copious vomiting. Jimson then had some hot tea, went to bed, slept well, and was all right next morning! But as his employer did not exactly like this sort of going on he was discharged, and left the country, and none of the present generation know who he is, never even heard his name. Reckoning a Ceylon generation at seven or eight years, four generations must have passed since then. Jimson is dead, dead long ago. Otherwise this story would not have been written. From it we would point to a lesson. Don't put very young men in a position of trust and responsibility, before they have had some knowledge and experience in the ways of the world. It is not doing them justice. Again, beware of the first temptation, however small. It seemed a very light matter taking a bottle of wine from a store-room, with the full intention of replacing it immediately. This surely was no great harm. But look to the after result, as shewn in this "ower true tale." The proprietor with whom Jimson engaged is alive, and reads the *Observer*. When he reads this he will at once recognize the whole facts of this story. But who was his senior? Who was the fellow that dashed cold water over his head and shoulders, and sent him out to blow a cow's horn at five o'clock in the morning, and did many ether wonderful exploits, recorded and unrecord in this reminiscence? Guess who he was. He is still alive and hearty, has many friends in Ceylon, where he is very well known. But what is the use of guessing? A guess is not a certainty. Read it "black on white," and if the printers' ink makes no blot or error in spelling you will read

P. D. MILLIE.

CHAPTER XXV.

A TURN IN THE KALEIDOSCOPE OF MR. MILLIE'S MEMORY: PROPRIETORS ONCE MORE "TO THE FORE."

A friend has just said:—"You have written a great many wonderful stories about superintendents and coolies, but, with the exception of Mr. Wildgoose, none at all about proprietors. Now, you don't mean to say that he was a correct specimen of them in those times; he was surely an exceptional oddity. Come, this won't do. Spin us a yarn about the proprietors of the olden times. Don't screen their faults and failings because *you* have joined their ranks; small credit to yourself in having done so, for, if what we hear is true, that act was more the result of sheer luck than 'gude guiding.'"

‘ PROPRIETOR PLANTERS.’

“Come, come,” we reply, “this won’t do. ‘Sheer luck’ indeed! Don’t you remember what I wrote some time ago about chances passing by, and how every man certainly has had some, but he either did not know it, and they floatedd past, whispering softly ‘Catch me, catch me,’ or he did not hear the whisper? If he did hear something, what more probable than to give his ear a brush with his hand, mutter, ‘Confound those mosquitoes,’ and pass on, in the opposite direction!” Some of my friends did all they could to prevent my becoming a proprietor. They reasoned with me on the absurdity I was about to commit. “A sensible fellow like you,” &c. [For really, absurd and impossible as some may imagine it, the writer was once considered a sensible fellow, or at all events we were told so, but very likely this was only before our face, and no sooner was the “sensible fellow” gone out of the room, than the one remarks to the other, “Isn’t he an obstinate old fool?” Well, obstinacy is not a bad point, if you are in the right. An obstinate man is entitled to more respect, even should he be wrong in his views, than your soft pliable fellow who is never sure about anything he does being right, and always ready to turn aside on the argument of any sensible fellow (in his own estimation) who insists upon giving advice. Such a one is sure to find himself before very long in the same position as the old man and his ass, as described in the nursery fable, and had better go back to the nursery, which he will find a more suitable residence than the “cinnamon isle.”]

This preliminary flourish having cooled us down a bit, we state our opinion to be that we are hardly fit to write fully on a proprietor’s life in the olden times, being only a junior assistant, and as such held in small esteem by, and considered no fitting associate for, the great “big-wigs” of the time, big in their own estimation, so big that, oftener than otherwise, they burst and collapsed. “Only a poor assistant,” for then the superintendent had not the same *social standing* as he has now, which may be briefly shewn in relating an anecdote that actually occurred at the Gampela resthouse. “Boy,” says a traveller, dismounting from his horse, “is there any one in the public room?” “Yes, sar,” was the reply: “one gentleman and two coffee planters.” By using the words “coffee planters,” the way in which he did he meant to infer that they were only superintendents.

Proprietor planters were great swells, the great bulk of them being retired naval or military officers and ex-commanders of vessels in the Bombay and China

CAPTAINS, COLONELS, AND GENERALS.

trade. Almost every other proprietor you met was styled "Captain." Take the Ramboda district in 1845. With the exception of the estate above the bridge, they were all Captains from Kondegala down to well into Pussellawa, and even there also the Captain flourished. Not only this, but a Colonel would be found here and there, and even a General. No wonder that Ramboda was called "a nobby district," and that resident proprietors were considered "quite the thing," but although they were considered this in the social scale, it did not seem to make planting pay. It was just the old story, which is so incomprehensible to many, that a proprietor cannot manage his own property so well as a paid manager. We can trace the after life of most of these Captains, and also how and where some of them died, with one exception, and this was in the case of the resident proprietor of Monaragala, above the Rothschild Estate, in Pussellawa, who was a Captain Jacob, and was resident on his estate about the years 1845-46. Can any one tell what became of him, or how the property went out of his possession?*

They always had a superintendent of some sort to do all the common dirty work. Catch them issuing rice, measuring coffee, or mustering the coolies. Not that they were lazy in the mornings: quite the reverse. They would frequently be up long before the superintendent, even before daylight, and startle the boy with shouts for coffee, for they were off, either with their own dogs, or with a neighbour who kept a pack, away up into the jungles to hunt for elk, or down the chenas towards the Kotmale-ganga, in search of red deer. If, as was generally the case, good sport was obtained, the sportsman would be back about noon, for breakfast, and, having had quite enough hard work for the day, he would rest in the house till the cool of the evening, then a canter along the high road to exercise the horse, and have a glass of sherry and fifteen minutes' gossip with some neighbouring planter, which would give him an appetite for dinner. As it was always a case of early rising, so it was likewise early to bed. The dinner hour would be seven, and under ordinary circumstances to bed at nine: ten would be considered unusually late. But the proprietor—when he had nothing better to do!—would sometimes take the whim into his head to work very hard on the estate and have a thorough overlook and examination into everything. He was beginning

* If our recollection serves us, he was Mr. Pogson's predecessor in the Office of Government Astronomer, Madras, dying there of cholera.—Ed.

MR. MEEK.

to suspect that his man Mr. Meek was not quite up to the mark: he, himself, must devote more time to the estate. Meek was a very well-meaning fellow, but he was too soft: he did not pitch into the coolies half enough. Then he would suddenly make his appearance at very unusual hours, say at three or four o'clock, no doubt with the object in view of satisfying himself that the work was not stopped before the time. On looking back on these times, how absurd it seems the exactness with which they used to insist on the last minute, as if that was any criterion of work done. We well remember feeling like a criminal caught in some evil deed, when, on unexpectedly meeting our employer a few minutes after work was stopped, he took out his watch, and said in a very reproachful way: "It is not four o'clock: it wants five minutes to it. I have had all the trouble of coming out for nothing. You have left off work too soon." It was useless our explaining that the people had finished their task, had worked well, or that, as they had started work in the morning with our time, they were entitled to go in the afternoon by the same time. He would shake his head doubtfully, and keep saying: "You are too easy with the people; it is not four o'clock, your watch is fast. I am going to Kandy to-morrow and will take in your watch, to have it cleaned, regulated, and set." Mr. Meek said very meekly his watch had undergone a thorough repair a few weeks before, that he was very well pleased with it, and in fact that it kept capital time; but his employer would take no excuse, the watch he must have, the result of the discussion being that the proprietor, as a matter of course, had his way. Mr. Meek's excellent time-piece was put into the hands of a Kandy watchmaker, and most old planters know the result of that; the fact was it now went very slow, which pleased the proprietor, as far as regarded 4 p.m., but what about the 6 a.m.? Ah! he never saw that, but the fact was our knowing proprietor had lengthened his rope by cutting off one end and sewing it on to the other!

Keeping coolies late at work of an afternoon, because they were late of turning out to muster in the morning, as a rule, is just playing at "see-saw," for the next morning they will be late, because they were kept late the evening before, and so on it will go, trouble and turmoil, grumbling and growling, day after day. In this case let the superintendent take the initial step, and some fine sunny afternoon consult his watch, tell them to look at the sun, it is barely three o'clock. "*Vibigi ódu*: away you go; only

John Emery

NEW PLANS.

see, you are on honour, and out at muster sharp six to-morrow morning." My word for it, won't they do it! You will find them all ready waiting for you; *you* will be fain to run without your second cup of coffee, in case the coolies should look reproachfully, which, as plain as possible, says, "We are waiting; keep up to the mark," and beware in time of any tendency to a relapse, of which there is always a likelihood and tendency. The writer has often had some "disagreeables" with his neighbours on account of letting his men off "so soon," but then they never said anything about *when* they turned out in the morning: they did not *see* that. Where could they be?

One proprietor, whose name was Mr. Perean, was always cutting about the country, visiting his friends, and on his return was generally quite full of some new plan or project which he had seen somewhere, or which some one had told him. One day, very close upon crop, and with his new pulping-house not nearly ready, he calls his superintendent, saying, "Mr. Meek, you had better stop all that work. Make out the carpenters' and sawyers' accounts, and discharge them. I have discovered a new method of pulping which does away with the necessity for pulping-houses and pulpers!" Mr. Meek represented that the new plan had better be tried before this rash step was taken, as, if the artificers were once paid off, it would be a difficult job getting them back again, should their services be required. But Mr. Perean declared there could be no difficulty in the matter, unless Mr. Meek created them himself, but, as he was such a slow fellow, he would humour him. So at morning muster Mr. Perean, much to the astonishment of all the coolies, was present; in fact the majority of the people felt rather alarmed, as such an unusual occurrence could bode them no good; they expected nothing less than a regular methodical beating all round.

Sacks and kutti sacks were ordered to be all thrown down on a heap on the barbecue, and in their place were issued baskets, just the usual sort in use for transporting manure. The coolies looked at each other with very grave countenances, quite at a loss to understand what "was up," but with true cooly politeness preserved their gravity, and said nothing. If European labourers had occupied their place, one would have winked to the other, thrust his tongue in his cheek, or in a rude independent sort of way exclaimed: "What's up now, master?" But, whatever a cooly may think, he is far too polite and respectful even to question an order, especially one

PULPING IN THE FIELD.

emanating from such a very high and important authority as the *periya durai*. Mr. Pereau himself accompanied the coolies to the picking place, set them in line, and commenced to explain the use of the basket. With their fingers and thumb they picked one ripe coffee berry, then moved the hand to the basket, gave the finger a squeeze, out popped the parchment coffee into the basket, leaving the pulp between the finger, which was then dropped, thus also saving all trouble and expense in manuring from the pulpp-it, for was not this an application of manure, free from all costs and charges? Now we all very well know the eccentric darts and flights made by a coffee bean, when suddenly squeezed out of the pulp, and so it happened that, far oftener than otherwise, the parchment coffee did *not* pop into the basket at all but popped away out amongst the weeds, and was lost, leaving only the useless pulp between the finger and thumb. And what a pity it was our intelligent proprietor did not take in a moral lesson, which was so peculiarly adapted to his own case, and which was so plainly shewn forth in the behaviour of the useless pulp and good parchment coffee. Many a one besides him has gone to a good deal of trouble and expense in order to get their manure applied for nothing, at the expense of losing all their parchment coffee. Our readers will no doubt understand the point of this plain reasoning. Mr. Pereau was not to be beaten so easily: he saw what was wanted. A tailor was sent for, who covered the mouths of the baskets with canvas cloth, one half sewed on, the other half buttoned over the rim, so that, when it got full, it had merely to be unbuttoned and emptied; a slit was made, with a knife, in the cloth, and into it the picker was to place his hand, squeeze his fingers, draw it back again with the pulp between them, leaving the bean safe in the basket. What a capital plan! No need of watching the pickers now. Certainly a good deal more came into the store, but, strange to say, it had passed through a very close-set pulper, in fact it was cut and bruised fully fifty per cent, and Mr. Meek received instructions strictly to watch the pickers, and find out what was wrong. This was soon done. The pickers, in utter ignorance that they were doing anything wrong, made no attempt at concealment; they picked a few handfuls of cherry coffee, then sat down on their *hind legs*, having previously got hold of a flat stone and a round one; between these stones they pulped the coffee just exactly in the same way as they would have ground up curry stuffs, and then put the bruised coffee into the basket. Our reader

can easily imagine the state of the coffee, and the state of Mr. Perean's mind at finding all his plans and schemes so persistently baffled. As usual, the whole blame was attached to Mr. Meek. He was not half strict enough; had he attended thoroughly to his instructions from the very first this could not have happened. Mr. Meek had got so accustomed to be blamed for the shortcomings, that, as a matter of course, he had come to the conclusion that everything that was wrong must have been his own fault; but really this latter accusation was rather too much for him. He made the reasonable remark that since he was such a fool, it was clearly to Mr. Perean's interest to get rid of him as soon as possible, and requested a settlement and his discharge. This natural request merely increased the wrath of his superior. "Meek," says he "you were bad enough before, but I never thought you possibly could be so unprincipled as this! To throw up your situation just as crop is well on, everything behindhand, everything to do, and nothing done. Meek, you are worse than useless to me, all the good I try to do is undone by your folly, but as I cannot countenance a want of principle in such a very young man as yourself and solely and wholly for you own good, although it is to be feared to my loss, you cannot be allowed to leave, until after crop, that is to say if you then are still of the mind to go. But if we get well through this crop, perhaps out of a sense of gratitude at the trouble I have taken in teaching you planting matters, perhaps we may understand each other better." The reply to this was, "Very well, we will see how we get on." The curious result of this little conversation was that the two certainly did appear to get on very well indeed; in fact nothing could be better, and it all proceeded from Mr. Perean merely letting his subordinate alone, or at all events ceasing to issue absurd and ridiculous orders.

How is it that in these times proprietors would never let their superintendents alone? If they were doing right, they often would interfere and compel them to do wrong; and if they were doing wrong, they would stop it, and make them do worse. What man of any mind could stand being always nagged at and found fault with, do what he liked? And so arose the dislike to take service on an estate where the proprietor was resident, or, as it frequently happened, where the proprietor made periodical visits, and stayed. How constrained and uncomfortable the superintendent would feel during his residence, and how light and free after his departure. Now this was not a right feeling: there must have been a screw loose somewhere to induce it.

PAY-DAY.

for one would naturally suppose the very reverse of this would be the feeling. Could it be that this sort of feeling was increased and added to by the fact the manager was only second, when his employer was resident, that he was not *periya durai*? It may be, something of a feeling of smallness would enter into his mind, for we are not at all times conscious of what is, or may have been, the root of many feelings constantly springing up in the human heart? Who can know it? It is a mystery even to its owner.

Mr. Perean was very punctual in paying his people: he always did it every month. A short time before pay-day he would say: "Meek, how much money will you require? The people must be paid on Saturday." The reply would be: "The check-roll is done up, and the balance due is £90, and on reckoning my own pay and other sundry items £100 at least will be necessary." "One hundred pounds!" says Mr. Perean: "absurd, impossible. Why I have £80 in the house, and have made the calculation that £70 is ample for estate payments, which will leave a balance of £10 to pay my own servants. You will find I am quite right, and it is enough. Here it is, take it away and pay the people at once." Mr. Meek shrugged his shoulders, but knew very well it was useless remonstrating. He took the money away, paid it out as far as it would go, and, when it was done, shook the empty bag in the sight of the fellows whose names stood at the bottom of the roll, leaving them to wait until such time as a further supply was forthcoming. When next pay-day came round, a repetition of what we have stated took place, with this additional aggravation that the balance unpaid in the month before had to be paid also. Of course Mr. Perean could not understand this: he was under the impression everything had been paid, at all events ought to have been. "This will never do. We shall get a bad name Mr. Meek. Why are you so careless and negligent? You ought to have paid every one last month, and you know perfectly well the calculation I made was most liberal and ample." Mr. Meek could have said something in his own defence, but he did n't, knowing that it was quite useless. Poor fellow! What a pity nobody taught him the simple form of estate accounts: wouldn't he soon have had the upper hand of Mr. Perean, for all he would have to do would be to request payment of his balance due, or that his accounts be challenged, questioned, and examined. In the disputes he had with his superior about the amount of money required, the former never would look at the check-roll, declaring it was useless; he had paid £80 last pay-day, and

STRIKING AN AVERAGE.

there were only thirty days in the past month and five Sundays, so that £70 must be quite sufficient, ample. "Meek, you are such a dull fellow."

Mr. Perean had often remarked that Meek took a very long time to pay the coolies, in fact upwards of an hour, sometimes even two; and he was quite confident he could do it himself in ten or fifteen minutes. In order to prove this, he undertook the duty of paying when next pay-day came round. Having seated himself at the table, he looks over the pay-list, and finds the balance due to a number of names to amount in various sums, chiefly six, seven, and eight shillings. There were, of course, sums both above and below, but he had calculated that this was the average. "Now," says he, "Mr. Meek, pay strict attention to my system, and you will observe the great benefit of it is no small money is required, nothing under a shilling. We don't even require to call out their names. Call the people all here; call the roll, as at morning muster. Yes, they are all present; very well, take this bag of money. We will both stand up, so as to form as it were a gateway through which the coolies will be marched, and each, as he passes by, without being allowed to stop, or pass any remark, seven shillings will be put into his hand, from which there is to be no appeal; it is the average. Coolies, of course, don't understand anything at all about averages, so it is quite useless explaining it to them, and, by the bye, have a few sticks ready in the corner of the verandah, in case it may be necessary to use them. I hope not. However we must be prepared, as in their ignorance they may kick up a row." But they kicked up no row; only next morning, it was found the first-class coolies had gone away, as it is called, "run off," and the lazy idle fellows seemed to be very pleased with their pay: they even went so far as to say it was not deficient: (*kuraivāna ilai*). Mr. Perean was quite enchanted with the success of his experiment in paying. True, some of his best men had run off. "But it was all owing to that fellow Meek, who no doubt had marked them absent by mistake, or to gratify some private spite. But you know we must just put up with that sort of thing; you can't get a perfect man in every respect; besides all new systems are disliked at first. Next pay day we will do better." Mr. Meek declared he had no doubt of it, and that a few more pay-days like the last would be even more successful than it, and leave them with nobody to pay at all.

Our readers will now easily conceive how the prejudice amongst superintendents and coolies against

TROPICAL CLIMATE AND THE TEMPER.

resident proprietors first arose, and why resident proprietors, as a rule, were short-handed.

The extreme and somewhat absurd picture of Mr. Perean is quite true, not as representing one solitary instance, but many. If there are any old planters of "thirty years ago," who read this, there is no doubt that this description will recal to their recollection some Mr. Perean or Perans, and some fellow who, like Meek, was so dull and slow as to be incapable of acting up to his employer's instructions, not so much from incapacity, as a sort of feeling of dislike we might almost say shame, at being the means of enforcing orders, which even to the meanest capacity amongst the coolies must have evidently appeared ridiculous and impracticable. A good many of the Messrs. Perean, before very long, began to open their eyes, and inwardly come to the conclusion to let the working of estates alone, that it was better to get a good practical superintendent and not needlessly and heedlessly interfere with him. If such a proprietor chose to live on his estate, it did not by any means involve the necessity of constantly meddling with the management and work; not that we go so far as many, who say a proprietor has no business to meddle with his superintendent. "Just as if," as an esteemed superintendent of the writer's once said to him, "a proprietor had no right to issue an order or express an opinion on the cultivation of his own property." Now, the objection is not in the issuing of orders or expressions of opinions, but the way and manner in which they are given and expressed. Whatever a man's position and calling in life may be, if he is a gentleman, he is most certainly entitled to both expect and receive treatment as such. A good many disagreeables sometimes arise from temper. It is a fact the climate of Ceylon has a strong action on the nervous system: after a long residence, the nerves get unstrung, one easily gets irritated, so that, as would naturally be supposed, after a long residence, one having got used to all the troubles and vexations would treat them with indifference. Not so: the longer you live on a coffee estate, the probability is the more irritable you will become, and less able coolly and calmly to carry on your work. A very good plan after a vexatious day's work is to order your horse and take a good fresh gallop, even if it was for only fifteen minutes. You will feel great relief, and if on dismounting you get under the bath spout, so much the better; the remainder of the evening will be spent in a pleasant and cheerful manner, in a very different way from what it would have been, had you thrown yourself

MR. EASY.

down on the couch, burst out into a tirade of abuse against the "boy," so that the boy warns all and sundry not to approach the bungalow, for "Master is angry." We well remember the day, not thirty years ago, when our neighbourson sidered us "daft," after a hard day's work, toiling about that dreadful hill. "What was he doing? Only look." And three or four glasses would pop in position from the verandah of the bungalow opposite. "Only fancy! Why he is galloping his horse round the beat or drive in front of the bungalow. Did you ever?" Just so, the best rest is not rest, but a change of occupation, and after a few turns round the "drive" and a cold bath we felt fresher than if we had rested on the couch for an hour.

When you feel angry, out of temper, dirty, and irritable, take a ten minutes' gallop, and a cold bath under the spout, and take my word for it, you will say that is not bad advice from our old friend

P. D. MILLIE.

CHAPTER XXVI.

AN "EASY" PROPRIETOR, AND THE HARD WORK HE GAVE HIS SUPERINTENDENT.

Mr. Easy was a planting proprietor of a very different stamp from Mr. Perean: his bungalow was just a shed of a place, consisting of a "but and a ben," not even a bed in it, for he slept in a hammock, and his visitors, when he had any, which was but seldom, on a couch. This shed, however, was a perfect model of cleanliness and neatness, everything in its proper place, and everything had a proper place, which any one with an eye to order could at a glance at once perceive. Any junior assistant of the present day would have scouted the very idea of living in such a bungalow. He would refuse to engage with such a "stingy old screw" of a proprietor who would not provide better house accommodation for the very superior class and position of young gentlemen who felt inclined to devote their time and attention, for a brief and limited period, to the coffee enterprise, and the benefits that the "stingy old screw" derived from their important services were not for a moment to be put in the scale against the very small amount of benefit they received, if indeed they received any at all, which was doubtful.

However Mr. Easy intended to build a better bungalow after his estate was fairly established, and, having this end in view, he amused himself in the cool of the mornings and evenings in laying out shrub-

AMATEUR ROAD-TRACING.

berries and garden grounds, for which occupation he seemed to have a natural taste and talent. He had planted out fruit trees, shrubs and flowers from all parts of the world, he had made periodical visits to the Botanical Gardens at Peradeniya, until he could obtain nothing new even there; he had written to friends in China and South America, and, no doubt, numerous mysterious, looking boxes, partially covered with glass, were now tumbling about over the salt sea foam, and so he was generally busy getting the ground in order for some expected arrival, some tree, plant, or flower, hitherto unknown in the Island. He very seldom visited, or had any visitors; during the heat of the day he was busy drawing out plans of his projected buildings, tracing out roads on paper, which traces were eventually to be put into the hands of Mr. Smith, his superintendent, with instructions practically to carry out the work, which it was not at all times possible to do, as the chief essential in road tracing is *first* to take a careful look over the "lay of land," second suit your trace as far as possible to the nature of the ground, with respect to the obstacles in the way, and how to avoid them, such as rocks, precipices, steep banks of streams. Mr. Easy having, quite to his own satisfaction, completed the trace of a road, on paper, would request the attendance of Mr. Smith, in order that a thorough explanation might be gone into, personally. Into the room which he used for an office Mr. Smith was ushered, and all the details of the work fully commented on, and instructions given that the trace was to be commenced and completed the next day. Mr. Smith departed with the sketch trace in his pocket, mumbling something which sounded very like, "I just wish I had him up the new clearing in his pyjamas and red slippers." About noon next day Mr. Smith called at his proprietor's bungalow, his face and hands so blackened with charcoal, his clothes torn and dirty, minus one shoe, and altogether presenting such an unusual appearance, that, to use a common expression, "his own mother would not have known him." He represented to his employer, that it was impossible to carry out his trace, that it just appeared as if purposely it had been made to cross right through large boulders, over precipices, and as for the crossing of streams, it was impossible to do so, in the usual way, by what is called paved crossings, the banks were so steep and rugged that nothing less than a suspension bridge would be required. But Mr. Easy poohpoohed the whole report:—"There is plenty of powder in the store, get out your jumpers, blast off all obstructions. And, by the bye, Mr. Smith, just go away up to the

CROSS CRITICISM.

top of the clearing immediately " (it was noon, Mr. Smith had had no breakfast, nothing but a cup of coffee at 6 A. M.): "take two coolies with you, a piece of rope, and measure what span of a bridge would be required for that stream. I see advertised in a London paper a very nice description of suspension bridges; we will bridge the streams, and, as Sir Edward Barnes said of the Kadugannawa Pass, *blast the rocks*." So Mr. Smith again took his departure, speaking a little above his breath, lucky his employer did not hear him, or he would have said, "Why, surely he has mistaken me for the rocks!" When Mr. Smith and his neighbour Mr. Meek met, of course they had a talk on the merits and demerits of their respective employers, and in these conversations, the curious feature was, that the one saw all the good points in his neighbour's situation, and none of the bad, in fact each thought that if *he* only had his neighbour's place, how jolly he would be, would n't he get on, &c.

Isn't this a curious feature in human nature, for it may be reasonably presumed that had the two occupied each other's situation, had their positions been reversed from the first, just exactly the same conversation and wish for change would have been the result. It has sometimes been remarked it is a good thing proprietors don't know or hear the remarks passed upon them by their superintendents. But has the saying ever been reversed? What would superintendents say, or do, if they knew all the hard things said or thought about them, when the accounts come in! Depend upon it, Messrs. Smith and Meek, your employers talk a great deal more about you than you do about them, and if the talking should not be in your favour, which it more frequently is than otherwise, on the same principle as the old saying about being always "sure to hear all the evil about a man whether the good is ever mentioned or not," it stands harder with you than it does with them, for if a rumour once goes forth—and who can keep in rumours?—it may eventually do much damage to the superintendent, whereas what do Messrs. Easy and Perean care about rumours, so long as their estates give a profit. If a proprietor gets the name of being extravagant and expensive, who cares, so long as he pays his way?

The only rumour which can affect seriously Messrs. Easy and Perean, is a doubt of their solvency, or being able to pay their way, twenty shillings in the pound, and that is very easily tested; if it should be false, it is soon forgotten. In fact their position is stronger than before.

It is a curious fact, that your easy-going fellow on a coffee estate, before very long, generally becomes uneasy in his health. One would naturally suppose that

WANTED—A CHANGE.

it would be quite the reverse, that Mr. Easy, who took such good care of himself, never went out in the sun or wet, if he could possibly help it, who lived at home, at ease, enjoyed every comfort, until actually his comforts were no enjoyment, but a wearisome routine of dull inaction, would never be ill. Neither he was, but when one lives for any length of time this way, a feeling of lassitude creeps and grows over one, that eventually tells on the nerves and muscles and produces a state of depression akin to disease, or at all events rendering the whole system prone and liable to catch it, whereas your bustling up, runabout fellow, who cares not a straw for sun, rain, and wind, if he is blessed with anything of a good constitution, keeps it up, and hardens it. Don't be always taking excessive care of yourself. If you do, it will become chronic, and, from merely the fear of getting ill, it will in all probability lapse into a reality. Rattle about in all weathers, go where and when duty calls, use an umbrella for the sun, and always change wet clothes for dry, without sitting in the wet, and you will enjoy far better health than those who are always taking such care of themselves, that they almost seem to *care* for nothing else. Mr. Easy did not feel well: the least exertion knocked him up; he ate very little, without any appetite, he used a good deal of beer, and took "a nip" before meals, to give him an appetite; at last he considered it advisable to take a run into Kandy and consult a physician as to the symptoms of his debility and failing health, the result of which was, an order for a complete change for a week, or month—a sea voyage to any of the Indian presidencies, China, or Australia.

But he could not see his way how to get away; people in his case never do, they have always (in their own estimation) so much to do, and—how could he trust Mr. Smith, who would go all wrong, without his constant supervision? At last, a bright idea struck him, so he mounted his pony, and rode over to his friend, Mr. Perean, in a few words stating to him his difficulty, and asking him if he would undertake the supervision of Smith, during his absence, "he would do as much for him any day," &c.

Mr. Perean put his hands in his pockets and burst out laughing. "Why," say he, "what's up with Smith now? Take my advice. Go away home at once, pack up your traps, and tell Smith you are off, and all you say to him is 'Do your best, or what you consider for the best. And here is a cash credit for you, in case you may require money.' The very worst thing you could possibly do, is to put me on the overlook over Smith; he will at once see you have not confidence

in him, and will be soured and dispirited. Trust him, trust him implicitly, that will put him on his mettle, and I tell you he will work harder and better than when you are present, because he will know well that in any error of management the whole blame will rest upon him, so, on the contrary, all correct management will be wholly and solely to his credit. Responsibility sir, responsibility is a great spur to a man, and it is often very surprising how it develops one's good qualities, which unless upon the pressure of responsibility would never have been squeezed out : go away, my friend and tell Mr. Smith, as I have directed, and you may also tell him, if in any case of emergency he wishes advice or directions, to come and consult with me, as an adviser, not a superior, and I will do my best to assist him. But he does not need it : Smith knows as much about planting as I do, and a great deal more than you do. Easy, a great deal more. Give yourself no anxiety ; take my word for it. You may be away for six months or more, come back and find not only everything all right, but so much improved, on account of your absence, that I quite expect you to exclaim 'The best thing I can do is to go again.' " But Mr. Easy shook his head mournfully and said, "It's all very well for you to talk if you were in my position you would feel very different." However, he packed up his box, ordered a trap from Kandy, and next morning took his departure as if he were going to be executed.

But the loom of the scaffold that threatened his execution soon faded away. All who have come through the same experience can tell how, as the last sight of the coffee faded away in the gloom of the horizon, or was lost to sight, "to memory dear," behind the spur of a mountain range, at every turn of the road new scenes appeared, the fresh air, the rapid motion, created as it were new life and raised the spirits. At the hotel in Kandy, he met with a number of old friends, old stories were told, past reminiscences long since slumbering or asleep were recalled to memory, until he suddenly remembered next morning he must be up at half-past four in time for the coach and that it was time to turn in. "The coach !" says a friend ; "where are you off to !" "Colombo, and a sea voyage by medical orders for my health," was the reply. "Your health ; a good joke. Who's your doctor ? Why, man, he's taking a rise out of you. You are looking better now than you did ten years ago." Mr. Easy being reminded of the state of his health suddenly collapsed, put his head between his hands, leaned forward on the table, and declared he felt so ill, he was doubtful if would be able

THE TRIP TO BOMBAY.

to proceed on his journey, bade his friends good bye, he would not see them in the morning, perhaps never would again. However he slept well, and the boy had to rap rather hard at the door next morning before receiving any reply. We need not describe the coach journey down; most of our old friends know all about that, all about the bad breakfast at Ambepussa and the feeling of freshness and delight caused by the first glance at the sea. Our patient ate a good dinner, enjoyed the fresh fish, went to bed early, slept sound, and had a ride or drive round the Galle Face before breakfast next morning; after breakfast there was no lounging about, but a carriage was ordered, and he made a whole round of visits, and in the evening went out to dine. This sort of thing went on for a few days. One afternoon just as he was dressing for dinner a post-letter was put into his hands; he at once recognized the handwriting of Mr. Smith. It will naturally be supposed that he at once tore open the letter to see what was wrong, for something must have gone amiss; hadn't he been away for three days? He did nothing of the sort, did not even open it, but tossed it aside on a corner of the dressing-table with the exclamation: "Bother that fellow Smith. He need not have been in such a hurry scribbling away before I am well off; it is not likely anything can have gone wrong already. I'll read it to-morrow morning. Boy, send out for a carriage immediately."

To-morrow morning duly turned up, and some friends also turned up at the morning coffee and cigar, then a ride out, then breakfast, and Smith's letter was either forgotten or at all events still unopened; at last he remembered that it might be advisable to read it; it was not a long one, only a few lines as he had been ordered to write, and wishing to know what his employer's wishes were with regard to that road trace, which he had promised to consider of and let him know. But Mr. Easy had no heart now for roads and traces, so he wrote Mr. Smith just to do what he considered best, and no doubt it would be the best. During the times of which we write our costly pearl, the steamer *Pearl*, was not in existence, as this vessel did not arrive for the coasting trade till July 1858, so a voyage round the Island was not at all times or easily to be got, so we cannot say how our sick man proceeded to sea. All we know about it is, that Mr. Smith in due course received a letter dated Bombay intimating that the patient was quite restored to health, that he was afraid the climate of Ceylon did not agree with him, and that really he did not know when he would be back. Not a word was said about the estate, roads, or traces, which astonished Smith that he went over to Mr. Perea's

to have that gentleman's opinion as to whether Mr. Easy was dangerously ill or not. Perean glanced over the letter in his shrewd sharp way, threw it down on the table, chuckled and rubbed his hands, and said : "He's all right; never was better. Just what I thought; dangerously ill, ha! ha! It's my opinion, Mr. Smith, that he is dangerously well! and he will be grudging money for the estate, wanting it all to spend himself, but if there are any signs of this state of mind turning up turn upon him. Say roads are traced and must be cut, blasting is expensive work, and if he grumbles it's all his own orders. Stir up his memory as to when he said 'Blast the rocks,' and then you know with a double force you will get through with them, for while you are blasting them here when he gets your letter, won't he be doing the same in Bombay? But perhaps better let bygones be bygones; he will never trouble you, and it's not likely when he comes back, if ever he comes to reside at all again, that he will ever trouble you or trouble himself in the way he used to do. I don't think he will. Easy will come back a changed man. The spell is broken."

About three months had now elapsed since Mr. Easy's departure, when one afternoon Mr. Smith received a letter from him, intimating his arrival at Colombo, and stating that he would be on the estate to-morrow afternoon to dinner. Of course Mr. Perean came over to meet him, and welcome back his old friend. The two gentlemen were pacing up and down the verandah, occasionally looking at their watches, and stating their opinion that, from the bad state of the roads, the carriage which would without doubt be hired from Kandy could not turn up for some time. They even hoped Mr. Easy would not have forgotten to procure some pillows, and cushions for the jolting would be very bad, but, just as they were hoping, the sharp clatter of a horse's hoofs was heard. They looked out, and a gentleman was riding up the road at a sharp canter. "Who can that be?" says Mr. Perean. "It looks like Easy, but I don't think he can ride, and the fellow coming up certainly can ride. Oh, just look," and instead of coming round the drive, Mr. Easy—for it was he—leaped his horse over the rose fence, and came cantering over the grass-field straight up to the bungalow, waving his cap and looking the very picture of health. After a hearty shaking of hands, the conversation turned upon the horse, and all his good and bad points were discussed. "There's another one coming," says Easy, "of a shorter stouter cut, for estate work, in fact for Mr. Smith's especial use. I was thinking it must be hard work for Smith toiling up

A SURPRISE.

that hill twice a day : it will be the same time you know, and instead of him arriving at the working place tired and done out, he will be quite fresh, and in fact the value of the horse will soon be repaid, if we take everything into consideration. But, by the bye," says Easy, looking up the hill, as the setting sun cast its rays on the red earth, cutting off the new roads, "what a lot of nicely traced roads are cut. Perean, I did not expect you would have troubled yourself tracing roads for me ; I am for ever indebted to you." Perean laughed and said, "This is the first time I have been on the estate since you left."

"Well," says Easy, "who traced them, for any one can see, even at this distance, that they are well traced? Did you employ a man?" "Well," says Perean, "the man that traced them was Smith." "Smith! None of your joking. What does he know about roads?" The reply was, "Wait till to-morrow morning and see?" To-morrow morning came, and Mr. Easy was up long before the sun, all rigged out, long staff in hand, for a toilsome ascent up the hill. After partaking of coffee with his friend—who had remained the night, he goes out to the verandah, and is somewhat startled at seeing the two horses, saddled, standing at the door. "Why, what is this?" says he. "To ride up the hill," says Perean. "You can ride up to the very top." "But how are the streams crossed? You surely have not ordered the bridges that I was going to write for from England." Mr. Easy's astonishment may be imagined, when told that bridges there were none ; they were quite unnecessary, and, as they rode up the hill, it was explained to him, how Smith had looked out for good natural crossings, and had conformed the trace of his roads in order to meet them. So that all these crossings required was a mason, during the dry season, to lay down flat slab stones, which, if well laid and packed, would stand any ordinary flood, and then, in event of continued rains, large blocks of stepping-stones were laid on the crossings. so that one could step across, dry-shod. Mr. Easy said nothing, but, as he approached, and crossed the crossings, paused and took a good look at them, and seemed to be thinking a great deal ; at last he said, "I had no idea Smith was such a sharp fellow. In fact, I think I had better go away again." But Perean replied, "Why go away : why, if you prefer it, not stop on your own estate, and amuse or enjoy yourself, and let Smith alone ; leave him to manage and work the estate, just the same as if you were absent?"

Mr. Easy said he did not believe either himself or

any plauting proprietor could live long in this way. What a meaningless, purposeless existence! To lounge about, looking on, and neither saying nor doing anything, in fact a perfect nonentity on your own estate: quite enough to make any one ill, or at all events predispose one to disease. The question may be asked, why be a nonentity on your own estate? Get away out and look after the work. Then what becomes of the superintendent? It is not very likely he will be of much use; the coolies will ignore or make light of his instructions and orders, and appeal to the big master, and if any appeal has even the smallest semblance of being sustained, or even listened to, a blow is struck at the usefulness and authority of the superintendent from which he will never recover. Again, whatever your own ideas in private may be, take no notice of the appeal, and say you never interfere in estate matters, refer them to your superintendent, what do you become? A nonentity in the estimation of your coolies, who, of course, cannot understand your principles of non-interference, and impute it altogether to a wrong motive or motives: incapacity, laziness, very probably even a fear of your own superintendent! So that very probably they may be talking amongst themselves, "A pretty periya durai is he. Why he is afraid of the sinna durai. He is afraid to give an order, and everything the sinna durai says, no matter how absurd, must be done." That, or something like it, is very probably Ramaswami's opinion of the periya durai. They cannot understand, or rather thoroughly comprehend, the policy of non-interference on the principle of, "no man being able to serve two masters."

The periya durai, when dismissing a complaint, taking the complaint to proceed to the sinna durai, may even be taunted in a side whisper to a comparison, for it is rarely one single man makes a complaint, he has always a witness, or witnesses, is generally in company, although his companions may be mute, silent witnesses. There will be a slap at the periya durai, "He's afraid of the sinna durai. He does not understand, or cannot work, himself, he's afraid of the sinna durai, in case he may be angry and go away,—and then what will he do, for he does not understand the work himself." "Does not understand the work himself." Few can be aware of how much is comprehended in this expression! For there is no greater swing-power or authority a master can have over his coolies, than to show and prove that he quite understands his work, and how to do it in all its departments. If you are master of your work, and how to do it, you are master also of your

COOLY CRITICISM.

coolies, they respect you ; every one respects a man who understands his business, and goes at it with a will. Suppose your pulper or machinery goes wrong, get a man to set or put it to rights, cannot *you* tell almost at the first glance, whether he can or will do it, or not ? The practical way in which he takes off his coat, tucks up his sleeves, gives a few sharp shrewd glances at the faulty machine, tells at once he is master of his business. You feel confidence in him, you know he will set your machine, and you don't trouble him. On the contrary, there is a something almost indescribable, that you can at once stamp the man who does not and cannot set your pulper, a something that tells you, the moment he takes the wrench or screw hammer in his hand that he will not do it, and you are right. All of our readers must have noticed, when there was anything difficult to be done and anybody could do it, when the job devolved upon the master, as the last and only resource, and he undertook to do it, how he was watched by the coolies, every motion and action. If he was successful, what bright happy faces they put on, talking amongst themselves. "Our master did it." "Our master can do it." "Our master can do anything." And how cheerful they go away under the confirmed opinion "Our master can do everything," and what an additional power it gives him in possessing their confidence. But if the master should be baffled, or puzzled, the cooly is too polite to pass a rude or discourteous expression or opinion. But is n't he like "Jack's parrot," who, if he did not or could not speak, just thought the more ? They will think their own thoughts, and speak them too, amongst themselves, but of course you hear nothing of them, all the time wondering how it is you cannot command the same respect and attention that some of your neighbours do. The reason is, you don't understand how to do your work.

Judge of Mr. Perean's astonishment, when one day Easy called and said, it was all settled, he was going home ; he had been going into his accounts, and found his living on his estate cost him over and over again more than it would in England, while he had neither occupation nor amusement : in fact the money was just wasted ; he would go home for a couple of years, and then come back again to see how matters had gone in his absence. He would leave Smith in full charge, subject to the Colombo agency, who would have his power of attorney, in case, and only in case, anything went wrong. Judge also of Mr. Easy's astonishment when Mr. Perean clapped him on the shoulder, "Hurrah, old boy, that's right, and I will go with you, for I am tired of this sort of thing too ; we will

GOING HOME.

give our youngsters a chance, and see how they get on without us." So Messrs. Easy and Perean went away, and were no more heard of, until after a time long letters turned up every mail, grumbling about excessive expenditure, expenses were frightful, far more than were ever spent during their residence, and that they must come out again and retrench, and put a stop to this lavish waste of money. However they did not, they had probably looked at the other side of the question, which was larger crops. Estates promising a longer established and more remunerative investment, an investment which could bear an investigation beyond that mysterious epoch in coffee planting, called "next year." Or very probably, in their calm moments of reflection in the old country, they had privately come to the conclusion, that they could not, or would not manage their own estate, because whoever they met with engaged in conversation about coffee, Messrs. Smith and Meek were never mentioned; it was all what they had done. But they never said a word about what they had not done, or done wrong or if they did it was Messrs. Smith and Meek that did it. Most proprietors were the same; we know one exception, he is

P. D. MILLIE.

CHAPTER XXVII.

SHOWING HOW CEYLON COFFEE ESTATE WAYS AND
MANNERS UNFIT A MAN FOR LAW-PROTECTED
ENGLAND AND FOR MIXING IN POLITE SOCIETY.

"Gone home." Often have we received this reply to an inquiry as to the whereabouts or some old friends whom we had neither seen nor heard of for a long time. "Gone home," which means left the Island, and gone to the land of his nativity, after an absence of twenty or thirty years, the result of which is by no means what the words imply. Often quite the contrary, for it may be truly said he has gone to meet, if indeed there are any to meet, the friends with snow-white hair "whose locks were raven when they parted." Gone to what appears for a time a harsh cold ungenial climate, gone to assume an entirely new mode of life, probably uncongenial, new habits and customs, apparently stiff, formal, unnatural, and not at all in accordance with *his* idea of comfort and sociability, gone to be represented and excused amongst his friends as a peculiar fellow, a sort of oddity, "one who you know has lived all his life amongst black people, who is ignorant of our customs, but not such

THE PLANTER IN THE OLD COUNTRY.

a bad fellow on the whole. He will come round by and by no doubt, and, in the mean time, we must just bear a little with him." Supposing our friend, as is generally the case, times his departure so as to arrive in summer. He, as a matter of course, gets up at five or six in the morning; looking out of his bedroom window how beautiful everything appears, the fresh green foliage, so different from what he has been accustomed to gaze on, the song of birds, the bright cheerful sun, without the burdensome heat, how pleasant to go out and have a stroll. So, having finished his morning toilet, he steps out into the public room, and also steps into utter darkness, for no one is up, and the shutters of the room are all close barred. After some difficulty, stumbling over chairs, and knocking his shins against sofas, he reaches the door, or window, fumbling about for the bar catches, and not knowing their way he lets them down with a crash, which alarms the whole house. Dressing-gowns and night-caps peer through the murky light on the stairs, the owners therein being evidently under the impression that a gang of house-breakers have commenced operations, but at last, when aware of what is going on, they say one to the other, "It is only that queer fellow up at this time of the night." Doors are then heard to slam, bolts and locks to turn, as much as to say, "We will keep him out here at all events." A flood of light having been admitted into the sitting-room reveals, to say the least of it, an uncomfortable sight. In anticipation of a morning cleaning, the night before the carpets had been taken up and rolled up in a corner. The tables are covered, or rather heaped up, with couch pillows and chair mats, the couches themselves are standing up one end, and the chairs all piled up in a corner, one over the other. A feeling that he wants something now comes over him, a somewhat similar one to what he felt when he used to shout out: "Boy, bring coffee"—but there are no boys here. The girls are all in bed, from which were they to be roused at that untimely hour, it would probably lead to a request for wages due, and a discharge, or at all events a notice to leave. The kitchen fire is black out, so our friend sighs, lights his pipe, or cigar, mechanically takes an *umbrella*, unbolts the door, and walks out into the fresh morning air, which is all, or more than all, he expected to find it. He probably walks out, into or through a densely populated district, but all is still as the regions of the dead, shutters and blinds all closed, not a being to be seen. By and by a few doors will open, and servant women, with bare heads and arms, may be seen, down on their

UP IN THE MORNING.

knees on the door-steps. He looks curiously, and thinks, surely they might have attended to their religious services, before leaving their rooms, or is this some new custom or,—“they are only scrubbing and cleaning the door steps.” But, if he looks curiously at them, so also do they at him. Perhaps they are thinking: “Here’s a queer man, been up all night, been keeping it up with ‘We won’t go home till morning,’ probably not quite sober, hardly safe to look at him. Going home to bed at this time in the morning!” Then they will rise, go inside the door, leaving it just chinked, and through the chink, a nose and two eyes may be seen peering at our friend, until he turns the corner, and is lost to sight. He leaves the town, and takes a turn into the country, where all is equally still and quiet. A painful feeling of depression comes over him, and he feels anything but refreshed and invigorated by his morning walk, and makes up his mind to give it up. On his return he meets a few ploughman and carters going out lazily to commence the labours of the day, who stare at him, as if there was a price set on his head, and they would like to catch him; gangs of women just commenced to work in the fields rest on their hoes as he passes, and give him a good look, then they all commence to talk, still looking at him. What can they be saying? There is nothing odd in a gentleman walking along the public road. Yes there is, at that time in the morning, it is not “the custom of the country.” We need hardly remark, our friend returns, not in the best of humour, and anything but refreshed with his morning walk. He had gone out without his customary coffee and toast, had been smoking on an empty stomach, and had no appetite for breakfast. He is fain to give up these morning walks as the worst of two evils: if he can’t lie in bed, or sleep, better keep in the house, and employ himself in reading or writing, until respectable people are astir, although it did seem a puzzle why respectable people should judge it expedient to sit up at night, and burn coals, gas, or lamps, with all their doors and windows barred and bolted, and lie in bed in the early and even late morning, or forenoon, in good daylight! Our friend is, however, told that this sort of life is chiefly confined to towns, and their vicinity, and that if he took a trip into the country districts he would find matters different, and more in accordance with his former mode of life. Acting upon this hint, he packs up, and takes his departure per train for some distant country station, bent on having a ramble amongst the woods, hills and lakes. In due course of time the train puts him down at a remote country

FISHING AND SHOOTING.

station, and, having secured comfortable quarters at the hotel, he unpacks his gun and fishing-rod. It is well on in August, grouse shooting had commenced, and he had taken care to provide himself with a shooting license, although he did grumble, yet still he was told it was the law. On making inquiry about shooting grounds, he was told, if he had not rented a shooting, he must obtain leave from the landed proprietors, or their representative. As for renting a shooting, such was far beyond his pecuniary means, and how could he obtain leave when he knew no one, so under these explanations his gun was tossed aside as useless, under present circumstances. He could see some fine rivers and streams all about, which he was told were all full of fine trout. Yes, he would try his hand at fishing. He used to fish ever so long ago, when a boy; he would try his hand at it again. So, having provided himself with fishing tackle, and after a night's rain, when the streams are rolling down, of an earthy colour, turbid and tossing, and the sky above with a leaden hue, in full fishing rig-out he sallies forth, on to the small beaten foot-way, winding through the grass, along the edge of the stream. A few casts are made, the fish rise well, and, what is very satisfactory, are well hooked and landed. His fishing basket is fast getting filled. On and onward he goes, completely unconscious that some one is watching him on the top of a knoll, not very far off. After a short time, the man who seemed so intent on watching the progress of the fisher sharply descends the hill, walks up to our friend, touches his hat, saying, "Beg pardon, sir, but I suppose you have leave from the proprietor, which he always give, in writing; kindly show me your permission." Our friend looks round, and sees a stout thickset man, dressed in drab gaiters and moleskin jacket, a short gun under his arm, and at his heels half-a-dozen rough ugly-looking terrier dogs. He asks him as to what his rights are for questioning, and is curtly told "I am one of the *keepers*, and my duties are to see that no trespassing or poaching goes on. But I suppose, sir, it's all right with you, only I must see your *lines*; it's the master's instructions." Our friend begins to feel rather discomposed, and is obliged to admit that he has no leave, either written or verbal. "In that case," says the stout thickset man, "I must walk you off the grounds," at the same time opening the fishing basket, and transferring its contents to his own capacious pockets. "Now, sir, if you please, address." His card was handed as at present residing at the Cross Keys hotel in the village. Our friend was longing about, at a loss what to do with himself,

for what is there for a man to do about an up-country village with neither shooting fishing, or any one to speak to ? He had made up his mind to leave next morning, and returned to the inn to pack up, and get ready. He finds some one there, wishing and waiting to see him, who thrusts a slip of paper into his hands, and immediately slips off. On examining the contents of the paper, our friend finds he must postpone his departure, as he is summoned to appear before the “Bench,” on a charge of trespass and poaching. The case did not occupy the Bench long ; our friend admitted everything, all the charges were true, he merely pleaded ignorance. Although he was called a Scotchman, from having been born on Scotch soil, yet, from his long absence, he was in a great manner ignorant of all the customs, usages and rules of the land. He did not know he was transgressing the laws of the land in walking along the banks of stream, in a remote mountain district, and catching a few fish, but he was told ignorance of the law was no excuse, and that he must pay the penalty, or go to jail. He did the former, and mentally remarked, that the old saw “Live and learn” was incomplete, and that attached to it should be the additional remark—“Pay and learn.” Our friend has had enough of the country ; he is off to town ; he is not indicted for trespass in walking along the streets, and can always get some sort of amusement of society, as he feels the inclination. Sauntering along the street one afternoon, an acquaintance puts his arm within his, and asks what has become of him, for “this ever so long.” “Oh,” says he, “it’s a long story, and I’m just going to smoke. Have a cigar ?” “No, no, not here, not here,” says his companion fearfully, pushing aside the cigar, “but come with me and I will show you a place,” and suddenly he pops down a stair into a tobacconist’s shop. A few chairs are standing in front of the counter, for any one that chooses to sit down upon ; our friend sit down, and proceeds to light a cigar, but the companion says, “Not there, not there, people passing along the street will see us—it won’t do ; come in here,” and he disappears through a back door into a dark closet, quite concealed from the observation of any, even of those who may enter the shop. Our friend follows him, but he can’t smoke. The little air in the closet is saturated with tobacco smoke—it is almost quite dark, and he feels very uncomfortable, even sick and unwell. “Let’s get out of this,” says he ; the reply to which is, “Stop till I’m done, I can’t smoke in the street.” “Why not ?” says our friend. The reply was, “People would see me, and they would talk about it.” “Well, but is

TAKING CARE OF ONE'S CHARACTER.

it wrong? Why should they talk about it. I always do it." "It's all very well for you," says he, "you are an independent man, with a source of income from foreign parts. I am a man in town, business well-known, and must take care what I do. I must take care of my character." Our friend mildly represents that he does not see how smoking a cigar in the street can detrimentally affect a man's character; if there is anything really wicked or sinful in smoking tobacco, it is just as bad to smoke on the sly, in fact worse, for to commit a wicked action in secret and then go forth, pretending innocence, is just the very worst sort of hypocrisy. The reply was, "Argument is all very well for you, but it won't do for the like of us. But I am thirsty and must have a glass of beer, come on, and have a drink." Out they sally into the street. They pass a great many very comfortable-looking, respectable places for retailing liquors. Our friend points them out, and says, "Let's go in here, here's a nice place," but the reply always is, "No, no, not there. Come on." Up one street, down another, to the right round one corner, to the left round another, and the two gentlemen are in a very quiet dismal-looking back lane; they now walk slowly until the companion comes to a stand, looks up the street and down the street, and is apparently satisfied with the inspection, for he suddenly disappears through a glass door, which shuts itself with a rebound. Our friends then enters and sees no one, except the man behind the counter. So he asks where the gentleman is who just entered, and is shewn into some back premises, all divided and subdivided into a sort of stalls and boxes; these stalls are all boarded up, so that none can see in; they have a plank seat round them, a table in the centre, and a bell rope hangs from the ceiling, it is very dark, the only light being from a small skylight high up, in the roof. The bell was touched and two glasses of beer ordered, when our friends ventures to ask, "What is the meaning of all this: passing by all the really comfortable-looking places of public entertainment, and coming so far, into this den of a place? Is the beer considered anything superior?" "No, no," says the companion. "No, no, but you know nobody would see us going in here, at least none who could possibly know who I am. I know you are a regardless fellow, and don't care what people say, but I am not, I can tell you!" "Regardless fellow, indeed!" says our indignant friend, "What is the meaning of all this? I told you I saw nothing wrong in smoking a cigar, or rather in being seen smoking, and I now tell you there cannot be any impropriety in drinking a glass, or, for that fact of it, even two or three, of beer if one is thirsty, and cer-

THE CUSTOMS OF THE COUNTRY.

tainly if there is anything wrong about it, it must be in going into low back street places drinking *on the sly*. If any one does see you going in or coming out of these places they are far more likely to talk about it, than if you were seen under the same circumstances, in one of the best houses in the principal thoroughfares." But his companion smiled, shook his head, and said, "You don't know the customs of society here; you know nothing about it." "Well," says our friend, "I am certainly getting a good many lessons in the 'customs of the country,' as you call them and, allow me to say many of them are very bad ones, at least have a tendency to produce a good deal of evil, and it seems to me, that what you call your position, or standing in society, has to do with all because the lower or working classes seem not under the same fear and dread. No one thinks anything at all about seeing a carter or working man smoking on the road, or going into his public for a glass of whiskey or beer, provided he does not drink too much. It is thought, if any one thinks of it at all, just a matter of course." "That's it," says our own companion, evidently grasping at an excuse; "that's it, the working or lower class of people do it, and so it would not do for us." We cannot see this, because if it is proper, in a respectable working man to smoke on the road and drink in a wayside public house when he is thirsty are they to be allowed social liberties, which are to be denied to their superiors? "Is a man to go about choked with thirst in a hot dry day for fear people should see and talk about him entering a liquor bar because he happens to be a man in good position as to means and society? A truce to all this nonsense, come in here, and have glass of beer or soda water if you like," but he would not: it was a very public thoroughfare; somebody would be sure to see him. So the friend bids his companion farewell and tells him plainly enough his companionship won't do for him. A man who is afraid to smoke or drink a glass of beer "before folk" for fear of what people will say about him has very probably a few other habits and customs, not so harmless as the smoking and the beer, which would hardly bear investigation.

Our friend having made some friends is introduced by them to others, until at last he receives an invitation to an evening party "just in a quiet way." He has a consultation as to how he is to dress, and is duly informed on this point. Having dressed himself all in black and white shirt with full open breast and white necktie, and glazed leather boots, he walks up and down the room, surveying himself in the mirrors. Surely his friend has not been taking his fun off him

AN EVENING PARTY.

for he thinks as far as regards dress, he looks very like the waiter at the *Royal* who served table at dinner, but his friend would never be guilty of such a mean joke as this, it must just be the custom of the country, for gentlemen to dress like waiters when they go out on ceremony; either that, or that waiters ape the gentlemen. He calls a cab, and drives off to his destination. On arrival he rings the door-bell, and is ushered into the lobby by a gentleman dressed exactly similar to himself: he is under the impression that one of the company must have risen, and have come to the door to receive him, possibly the host himself; but having been told he must not speak to any one, without being introduced, he keeps quiet, and watches the course of events. The gentleman who opened the door now asks his name, and is told, "Mr. Strange." After some fumbling in an open basket from amongst a number of others, a card is produced, about the size of a common visiting one, on which is written, "Mr. Strange and Miss Stiff." This is handed to our friend, who gazes upon it in mute astonishment. He gets very nervous, and a hot prickly heat is breaking out all over his body. "Upon my word," mutters he to himself, "this is rather sharp; my friends have been telling me I ought to get married, but I have not had time to think of it yet; besides it would naturally be considered advisable to see the lady first. It is really a very great liberty to take with a visitor for the first time, I won't stand it. I'll go away," and, while turning round for his hat, the door of the drawing-room is thrown wide open and he almost mechanically follows, or rather is elbowed in by the gentlemen in black, who shouts out with a full voice, "Mr. Strange." The host and hostess come up and shake hands with him. After bidding him welcome, they introduce him to Miss Stiff, and beckon to him to be seated on a vacant chair, no doubt left purposely for him, beside that lady. He sits down, casts his eyes round the room, and regains confidence on seeing all the gentlemen dressed exactly similar to himself, and ponders in his own mind the curious fact that it should be the custom of the country for men to dress for an evening entertainment and merry-making feast exactly the same as they would do for a funeral, only without the crape and weepers; indeed if it had not been for the presence of the ladies with their gay dresses, it looked very like a funeral meeting, for all the men seemed very melancholy, and spoke never a word. Our friend could not see any fun in this sort of thing, but seeing at all events he was introduced to one lady, and having been told that the more you talked to ladies the better you pleased them, in fact that great talkers were specially called "ladies' men," and that

STIFFNESS.

it was no consequence whatever what you talked about, if you only talked plenty, and if it was nothing but sheer nonsense, so much the better, and he was perfectly sure of the correctness of this information, because it was a well-known "ladies' man" who had told him, so he commenced to talk incessantly to Mrs. Stiff. She remained seated, very stiff-looking, nodding occasionally by way of assent, and sometimes saying "Yes. Dear me? Indeed! How many?" At last he became painfully aware that there was solemn silence throughout the room. None were speaking but himself, and all eyes were turned upon him. The men turned their backs to him, and said something which he did not hear, and was not meant for his hearing. The ladies put their scented pocket-handkerchiefs to their noses, and whispered behind them, the one to the other, "What an extraordinary man! How could possibly our worthy hostess, who is so particular as to society, ask that person to meet us? Who is he? Really we must leave early." The whisper then goes round, "A coffee planter from Ceylon. Immensely rich you know, quite a mine of money, all coffee planters are, and of course he does not know our customs." "Of course not," now is the general reply, "How can he be expected to know? Really we are quite sorry for him. Cannot you get some one to introduce us, for we are quite sure we would do our best to entertain him? How stupid and foolish to assign Miss Stiff as his lady partner for the evening. They could not have picked out worse. Now if any of us had been selected in her place, the poor gentleman would have felt much more at ease. How very unfortunate for him. He will leave the party with a very poor impression of the ladies, and all owing to that Miss Stiff." He did leave the party under a frame of mind that he had pulled through a disagreeable affair, but it was not owing to Miss Stiff, for she rather amused him than otherwise: it was the general feeling of stiffness that pervaded the whole affair which struck him as the general characteristic of the whole evening. The company did not seem at all to enjoy themselves. The host and hostess themselves no doubt were very glad when it was all over, and no doubt congratulated themselves, when the visitors were all gone, with "Well, we have done our duty to society and paid off our debt to those who asked us; a great bore you know, but then it is just the custom of the country." The host, brightening up on the departure of his guests, became quite sociable and jocular as he accompanied them into the lobby, helped them on with their top-coats, and thanked them for having had the pleasure

MAKING FRIENDS.

of their company. Should he send out for a cab for Mr. Strange? but that gentleman said, no, he would walk. "Walk!" says the host. "Absurd, oh! but you foreign gentlemen are so peculiar, and have such odd ways. You will be sure to catch cold, and then blame me." When Mr. Strange got out into the street, he felt quite relieved from the stifling heat of the rooms inside. It was a fine dry clear night, the bright full moon shining clear over-head, and he was somewhat amused at his host's idea that a coffee planter would catch cold on a night like this. He feels for his pipe and tobacco pouch, which had been left in his great-coat pocket, pulls them out, and commences to smoke, with great relish, for he had had no pipe the whole evening; and his pleasant free-and-easy walk home drives off all the feeling of stiffness that had been cramping him the whole evening.

The next afternoon, when strolling along the street, he passes a number of ladies and gentlemen whom he met and conversed with the evening before, but they take no notice of him, don't see him. He accounts for this possibly from the change of dress, although he cannot understand how he should know them, and they not him, for the difference in dress is mutual. At last he sees, coming straight on in front, Miss Stiff; nearer and nearer they approach. Surely she must recognize him. He had been told, it is the "custom of the country" always to allow the lady the option of recognizing the gentleman, and unless she does so it is not "the thing" for the gentleman to take any notice of her. His hand is ready and prompt to lift his hat, he looks earnestly at Miss Stiff, but she is looking earnestly also at some object far in advance, she does not see him and passes by. Mr. Strange feels very sad. He had done his best to entertain Miss Stiff the evening before, and they had become rather friendly, so far as her stiffness would permit, and now she had passed him, given him the dead cut, cut direct. What could he have done to have offended Miss Stiff? While brooding over this, his companion comes up asks him why he is looking so thoughtful and gloomy and is told of the cut direct just received. "Cut!" says his companion. "Nonsense, it is just the custom of the country. It is quite an understood thing that, when people meet at an evening party, their acquaintance is only for that evening, and does not extend into the next day." "But," replied Mr. Strange, "you say I must make friends, and if what you say is correct, how am I to make them? What is the use of meeting and becoming acquainted with people of an evening, if the next day they take no notice of you?" His companion explains

HABITS AND CUSTOMS.

that this result is only due to what are called ceremonial parties, and that the way to make friends is through personal introductions from your own friends. "Which means," says Mr. Strange, "which means, that if you have no friends at all to introduce you, one never will make friends, so you need not explain any further. This is not the way we do in Ceylon. If a man has no friends there, it is his own fault, and very probably the chances are he deserves none." "Oh!" says his friend, "that is not the custom here. You must conform to our habits, you know."

The object of the foregoing rambling writing must now be explained, as our readers may be saying "What has this to do with the heading of your chapter?"

There may be some, we fear few now, who after an absence of twenty or thirty years are contemplating a visit or retirement to the old country. Let them not look forward with too sanguine hopes of enjoyment. Recollect we are all more or less the creatures of habit; that during their long absence they have slowly but surely acquired quite different habits and customs for such a length of time that they have almost become natural ones. Nor is this all. The habits and customs of the old country have also been undergoing a rapid change, very different from what they recollect of, when they left in "their teens," in fact the string has been lengthening at both ends. Your best plan will be to rattle about the country a good deal, and live in hotels. This will give you more freedom of independent action than living on a visit in other people's houses, where you must not only conform to the habits and customs of the country, but the habits and customs of the house, and this to an old planter, accustomed to a house and establishment of his own, with perfect freedom of action, to say the least is not advisable. By all means live with your friends, accept their invitations, and pay them visits; if you wish to make friends this is the way, but have some place of your own, where you can retire to when you feel inclined. We don't mean property, but some place that you can call a private domicile where you can do as you like.

Of course you must judge of your own pecuniary means. But, if it is only a lodging, with parlour and dining-room, taken by the week, have a place to which you can retire whenever you like. This advice is on the understanding that the old planter is in good health, and able to go about and take care of himself. If not, how thankful he should be, if he has any friends or relatives left to welcome him home, receive him into their houses, and attend to his ailments.

COMING BACK TO CEYLON.

The habits and customs of the country have been touched upon in a somewhat comical and burlesque style, but without any idea of laughing at or condemning them. We would just appeal to any of our readers who have lived abroad for upwards of a quarter of a century, if somewhat similar ideas have not struck them as a first impression, after the free and easy style of life in any of the colonies.

But although the habits and customs have greatly changed we don't think for the better, the worthy people themselves have not changed, if you know how to take them; the change is in yourself. The planter, after such a long absence, will not feel at home for the first year, at least he will wish he had not left, he will wish he was back again, and very likely return. But, to his astonishment, he will find matters and manners have changed, even since he left, his old friends with whom he used to be so jolly, have gone to some other district, even the coolies and kanganies are more troublesome, even "cheeky." He does not feel at home in his own bungalow! How is this? He can't understand it. It is just that, during his absence in the old country, he has slowly, imperceptibly even to himself, acquired different habits and ideas of life. Coffee estate life has received a shock, from which it is doubtful if it will ever recover: in fact, we have often seen planters, who after a trip "home" returned to Ceylon, for a time quite spoilt, they were dull, spiritless, took little in their work, and were always talking about *home*.

We have seen others, who would arrive back again in great glee, shake us heartily by the hand, and express their pleasure at being once more amongst us all. Ceylon was not such a bad place after all, they would think twice before they went home again, it did cost such a lot of money. We can easily account for this very different view of home life. In the former case, the planter had remained a sufficiently long time at home, in order to get into the customs of the country; in the latter case, he did not. The old planter, at home, after becoming intimate with his new friends, will probably be always teased about, "Why does he not get married? it is the custom of the country." A man of his position and means to be lounging about, with no settled place of abode, and "nobody to take care of him"—is positively not respectable. The old fellow will say he is quite competent to take care of himself, but his friends will declare he is not, for did they not see him going about the other day without his overcoat, which was as good as if he had a ticket on

LADIES' SOCIETY.

his back with the word written on it in large letters—"unmarried"—for no wife would ever have permitted him to go out, without his great-coat.

He will probably relate the story of the wild goose and partridge. But his friends will have their joke also, they will say, "Well, you are not a wild goose, only a goose, and very tame one too!" The best way to treat him in this respect is rather to oppose and laugh at him, for all old planters are just rendered more obstinate and determined, when opposed and contradicted. They have got into this way from the absolute supremacy they were accustomed necessarily to exercise over all and decision in carrying it out. No appeal from his decision, even remonstrance is treason, and now what does he experience? His decision is pronounced utterly wrong, his remonstrances laughed at. He is a traitor himself and to himself. It will thus happen that if you oppose and contradict him in anything you wish him to do, he will be sure to do it!

If you see him particularly attentive to Miss Pretty, and you are glad that he is, laugh at him, as an old fool, tell him all Miss Pretty's good points or rather the only nice quality she possesses is her name, a doll of a creature, a sensible man like him to make an ass of himself. If he joins in the joke and laughs, there is "nothing in it." If on the contrary he fires up, and becomes very angry, says "Ass indeed, not such an ass as you think! A man at his time of life might be permitted to choose his own society, and because he enjoys the society of Miss Pretty he does not see why his friends should be so rude as to say he was 'sweet' on her," he will calm down when you tell him he is quite right, you had no idea he was such a sensible man, and that you were only joking. If he continues "sweet" on Miss Pretty, and increases his attention, never mention the subject, or if you do, only as a subject scarcely worth mentioning. The great probability is, that before very long he will mention the subject himself, as being all settled, and say, "Was n't I sly? Nobody ever suspected it!" Of course, you not only suspected it but were positively sure. Humour him however, raise your hands in wonder. "Well, you *are* a cunning fellow! Who would have thought it?" She thought you very much improved since you began to conform to the customs of the country. Now you are perfect, and capable of no further improvement, for you have wound up the whole in having made up your mind to conform to *the grand custom*, which has made the old country what it is, 'The land of honest men and bonnie lasses.' But what a *sell* for

SERVANTS.

our readers, who have been supposing all along they knew very well who the old planter was! Never mind who he was. The conclusion of the chapter will shew he was not

P. D. MILLIE,

CHAPTER XXVIII.

TROUBLES WITH SERVANTS—TAMILS AND SINHALESE.

"These dreadful servants! Do you know any one who can recommend a really good servant?" How often has this expression, or something like it, met the ear, when one is knocking about the old country. We have sometimes wondered if the expression was ever used by the servants themselves per contra, "These dreadful masters, or rather mistresses." No doubt it is, and the dreadful servant just considers herself as unfortunate in that dreadful mistress, because there can be little doubt that, if the dreadful feeling is felt one side, it will be also on the other. The general complaint about bad servants is in a manner universal, complaints that in a great number of cases are frivolous and uncalled for. We often wish those who are grumbling about bad servants had experienced some of the realities of bad servants, and no servant at all, in some of the outlying coffee estates "thirty years ago," or even later. In those times, no servant of good character and ability could be induced to go up-country, unless he had more than a usual respect for his master; no doubt his silent reasoning was: "If master chooses to go and live in mud huts, or talipot tents, with nothing to eat but rice and pumpkin, it was no reason why he should. Master can do as he likes." He will not wantonly give up his chatting at the bazars, his glass of arrack, and all his other little specialities and perquisites, and so it generally happened, when the master made arrangements to leave town for life on the estates, the faithful servant bewailed his hard fate in not being able to go with him; it was so unfortunate, so particularly unfortunate, just at this very identical time, that his father, mother, or some other of his very near and dear relatives, was very sick, dying, and in urgent and positive want of his personal attendance. To our old country readers we may explain, servants are engaged, or rather their engagement is considered, only a monthly one, subject to fifteen days' notice to quit on either side. The Ceylon servant is therefore much more independent than the old country one—who is generally engaged half-yearly, and expected to give certainly a

A VERY GOOD SERVANT.

good deal longer notice of leaving than fifteen days. Before we became up to the dodges of servants, we used to be very considerate. "Your mother is dying? Poor man, of course you must go, and have your full wages up to date," and on such an urgent occasion, for the sake of common humanity, we will cheerfully submit to the unpleasant inconvenience of having no servant. The kitchen cooly will keep us from starvation. A short time afterwards a special message would arrive that our servant's mother was very sick, and would have to be moved to some other part of the country, and of course that duty must devolve on him; he was very sorry, but he could not come back, and master had better get another servant. A few days after this on stepping into a neighbour's bungalow, who should also step in but our old servant, doing all the duties of his new situation. We would say something very reproachful, probably ask whether his mother was dead and buried, or had suddenly got well? He would say nothing, only probably give a laugh and run out of the room. After that incident we felt no sympathy at all with our servants when told of the illness or even death of any of their relatives, not even if it was their father or mother! If their parents had been of little service to them in many general ways, they made up for it in this very strange way, they got sick and died so often! When we saw our servant some morning come in with a very grave face, unusually serious, there was sure to be something "up." If, after the breakfast things were cleared away, instead, as usual, of retiring to the kitchen, he stood at a short distance from you, stood steadfastly looking at you, but said nothing, your former suspicions would be confirmed. You would then ask him what he wanted. After some difficulty the only reply would be "Master knows I am a vary good servant." The very good servant would be not in the least abashed or confounded, if he was told plump and plain that we knew nothing of the sort, but quite the contrary. If he did not retire, we would again press him on the subject, when he would likely begin some long story of the illness and destitution of some of his relations, and that they were very poor. A light now begins to dawn upon us, and we have a tolerably good idea what is wanted. So, to save a lengthened and prolonged interview, we plainly ask him how much money he wants in advance, for there is no manner of doubt that is what he is drifting at. We are right, the sum is named, and with some slight irritation, we exclaim, "Could you not have briefly said so at first, and saved all this long talk?" There

LOVE, MONEY, POWER.

must be something else he wants, for he is not gone, and after some further questioning he must have three days' leave to go and pay and old debt, which had been owing ever so long. We felt done, clean done; he had got the money first, and now had the leave of absence; he has nothing due, and, if leave is refused, no doubt he will take it without your option!

We are of opinion there are three things a man never forgets, and these are—his first love, his first sovereign, and his first servant, and this may be explained when we consider that these in a manner represent the heads of the general objects which actuate or control mankind—love, money, and power. Well does the writer remember his first servant: who does not? Because it is the first symptom, the first dawning sign that you are somebody; you have actually a servant. You give orders, and are obeyed. Whereas, before this event, you obeyed orders yourself, from your parents, your guardians, or employer of any sort. It is thirty-two years since we had our first servant, and ever since that long period of time, if he was suddenly to stand before us now, we would recognize him at once, and quite naturally bawl out, "Periya Karuppen, bring a fire-stick," in Tamil of course. His name even yet is perfectly familiar, for it was Periya Karuppen, who was a low-caste cooly boy taken out of the lines, but no matter who or what he was, it is sufficient to explain, he was our first servant. He could nothing but boil rice very well and make very bad curry, so that often we were fain to dine on the former and reject the latter, much to the satisfaction of Periya Karuppen, who got fat, sleek and shining on our rejected curry. He never could be taught to cover and lay a table properly, so eventually he was just allowed to have his own way, which was this: after laying the cloth, he managed that, he would open a box—one of the trunks, which had been used during the passage out, was now converted into a receptacle to contain knives, forks and spoons, of which our stock was half-a-dozen of each. He would take out all these knives, forks and spoons, and heap them up, on the middle of the table, tumbled all together. Three plates one above the other, would also be placed in the middle of the table beside them. He would then retire to the cook-house, from which he would slowly emerge with four plates in his hands, the one covering the other dish fashion, bending forward as if suffering from a great weight, but only from fear of their tumbling down; then two plates, covered by plates, were set down, near the edge of the table. A bottle of water and a cracked teacup were placed beside them, Periya Karuppen disappeared, and dinner was served. We

PERIYA KARUPPEN.

now draw in our only chair to the table. We have no difficulty as to which plate contains rice, for the plate is so heaped up as to be distinctly perceived projecting from under the covering one. This is removed, and a mass of boiled rice is displayed, enough to dine three or four, even if they had very good appetites.

Periya Karuppen had been frequently cautioned about boiling so much rice, but he would do it : nothing could stay this propensity. He would say, "Master must eat in order to do hard work for the big master," Nevertheless threefourths of the rice were always taken away to the kitchen unused, and the remainder was seen no more. It was very curious coincidence that in doing up the monthly accounts, Periya Karuppen, although fast getting fat and bulky, never drew more rice from the store than a quarter or half a bushel, and very frequently none at all, whereas one and a half or even two bushels was always down as having been consumed by "master." Periya Karuppen was strongly remonstrated with on this line of conduct, but he bravely and boldly replied, "it was not his fault master did not eat enough of rice ; it must be boiled and placed before him, and, if it was not eaten, why, it could not be lost, he must just eat it himself" ! It was the same way with the curry : he would not prepare a small, or even moderate, quantity ; the soup plate that contained it was filled so full, that it used to run out, and overflow all his hands, and even legs, before it was set in position, on the table ; when this was done, he would take an extremely dirty, disgustingly dirty towel, which hung over his shoulders, and wipe all his hands and legs, first ; then with the same towel he would proceed to clean the inside of the plates, before finally leaving the room. On removing the top plate from the one containing the curry, we would again remark on the large quantity, but, if the quantity was good, the same could not be said of the quality. It was frequently difficult to determine what it was made of : sometimes a very small piece of salt fish, sailing in an ocean of curry juice ; at other times we were so puzzled, as to require some information as to the material, and, after some difficulty in coming to an understanding, would find it was made of the fungus that grew upon the felled timber, in the clearing, or some nasty long rank green stuff that grew in the swamp down below the bungalow ; we would at last abandon curry altogether and eat rice and jaggery (caked sugar, or tablet) for breakfast and dinner. No wonder old planters are troubled with bad digestion ! Perhaps some of our personal ailments at this present period

FIRE-STICKS.

could be traced back as originating in those times, and the culprit was Periya Karuppen !

He had just as peculiar a way of setting the breakfast-table. The sugar basin was placed at the far end, the tea-cup in the centre. The tea-pot itself he would carry in from the kitchen, grasping the handle with one hand, and the spout with the other, just as if it was a tureen. It would be set on a plate, opposite the chair, exactly as if he intended us to sit down, open to lid, which one hand catch the handle, with the other the spout and swallow its contents ! Perhaps he thought this was the method of drinking tea. But he never remained to look, being apparently very unhappy until he got out, and away from the room, so that before sitting down to breakfast all his arrangements had to be disarranged, so that they could conveniently be got at. Perhaps something was wanting—the salt. So we would shout out, “Periya Karuppen.” Our servant, to save time, no doubt, would appear at the door with a large fire-stick, under the impression we were going to smoke; on it being explained that we did not eat, drink, and smoke, all at the same time, he would lay the smoking fire-stick down on the door-sill: it would save the trouble of coming back with it again. The wind blew the smoke into and nearly filled the room; we had again to get up and give the fire stick a kick out, at the same time perceiving the door-sill was all charred and burnt. Our worthy servant was standing close by, awaiting orders, and as the kick of the fire-stick had only given occupation to one foot, the other was put into practice also against Periya Karuppen’s antipodes, on which he uttered a loud howl, and bolted round the corner of the verandah. After breakfast, walking up and down the verandah, it suddenly struck us that all along the edge was covered with old fire-sticks, which, after having been used for lighting the pipe, were just laid down. We would give them all a kick out into the clear space in front, and so it frequently happened that all around the bungalow the remains of fire-sticks lay scattered about, also envelopes of letter; large quantities of waste paper, which had been used in making calculations, were just thrown out beyond the verandah posts, broken pipes, old worn out broomsticks of all sorts and sizes, the remains of paper umbrellas, old shoes, and what not. So that it was advisable periodically to order up a couple of coolies to clean round the house. The fire-sticks would be all collected and put in a heap to serve as fire-wood, and probably again as fire-sticks, the papers, old shoes and umbrellas put in a heap and burnt. So that, for a few days, the ground all about looked clean and tidy, and Periya Karuppen

WITHOUT A SERVANT.

warned to keep it so, but it was not in him, it was not that he would not, he really could not understand what neatness was, or what was its use.

Another thing Periya Karuppen could never be made to comprehend was how to make a bed. He would always place the bed-cover over the mattress, then the blanket and sheets on the top over all, one pillow at the foot, and the other in the centre, or at the back of the bed. Before turning in, we would call him and say it was all wrong, and teach him personally and practically how to make a bed, but he could not be taught, he could not understand it. At last we lost all patience, when, one night on preparing to turn in, we found the blankets and sheets placed under the mattress, which had nothing but the cover on the top, and the pillows placed at the foot. He was promptly called to explain what he meant, and his meaning was this: "It was a cold night, and the mattress would keep master warm." In return for this explanation he got something to warm his ears on this cold night, and the final result of all these unpleasant proceedings was, Periya Karuppen went back to the lines, and told his kangani he would not stop at the bungalow any longer. He would not be master's servant, and if it was insisted upon he would run away—he would. That night we made a light dinner, not from choice but from necessity, as there was nobody to cook anything, no, not so much as a plate of boiled rice. The dinner was a plateful of hard biscuits, and the last remains of a pot of jam, a few of which had been stowed away in the corner of a trunk by some of our relatives on leaving home. Our drink was water, which we personally brought from the spout behind the kitchen, in an old cracked bowl. About half-past six, it got very dark, and what was to be done for a lamp? There was no wick, no cotton, and, even if there was, nobody to trim it. We sat down on a chair, leaned forward, with elbows on knees, and our head resting on the palms of the hands, but we were not "greeting" (like Jimson): there never was anything of this sort about us, whatever sort of stuff our brains might be made of, there was one thing certain, very certain, in any case of great difficulty or energy, they never dissolved into tears! On the contrary, the difficulty created rather a pleasing action in the brain, which inspired confidence that they were there, and working! Having been seated as described for a few minutes, we got up, and went out for a light: it was no use going into the kitchen: everything there was black out. So we brought a fire-stick from the nearest lines, put it down on the mud floor with a few dry chips of wood. It was soon fanned into a gentle

REFUSING TO RETURN TO DUTY.

flame. We then pulled from under the bed, which was the general store room, a black bottle ! Readers, don't start, and utter some exclamation or denunciation about what we were about to do. The black bottle was half full of—coconut oil. Having poured some of it into a cracked tea-cup it was set on the table, taking a new cotton pocket handkerchief from a box (for there were none old ones) a strip was torn off, wisted up like a paper match, and soaked in the oil. A "wick" was now found, which was placed in the tea-cup amongst the oil, the top of it projecting slightly over the rim of the cup. A piece of paper was then lighted at the flame on the floor, then applied to the wick, and our lamp was lit ! A very good one it was, and gave a capital light, better, very much better, than the lamps Periya Karuppen trimmed. The next morning, of course there was no coffee, so we had to proceed to muster the people without the usual material refreshment. Before calling the roll, we looked curiously for Periya Karuppen, and at last perceived his two eyes looking over the shoulder of a great big fellow, behind whom he stood, very probably for protection, in case of a sudden assault. The roll-call being done, before commencing to distribute the labour, Periya Karuppen was ordered to go back to the bungalow, light a fire, boil rice, and make coffee for master's breakfast. He at once stepped boldly out from the hind rank, and stated most decidedly, that he would not, he would do nothing of the sort. "No, he would rather submit to have "his throat cut." A number of the coolies stared in utter amazement at this bold and daring breach of discipline. They caught hold of him by the shoulders and said "*Paiteyan*" (madman). We then very calmly took a pruning-knife, and sharpening-stone from a kangani, felt the edge of the knife with the thumb, rubbed it on the upper leather of our shoe, said it was very sharp and it would do !

"Now you are all witnesses of the decision Periya Karuppen has himself come to, of the alternative he has himself proposed. Catch hold of him, bring him forward, in order that he may have his throat cut ! Quick about it ! and have it over at once !" The coolies seemed quite to understand the joke, put the palms of their hands before their mouths, and turned away their heads, for they consider it improper, undignified, or even wanting in respect, to laugh in presence of a superior. There was now some motion made to collar Periya Karuppen and bring him forward, but it was altogether unnecessary. For our worthy servant made a sudden rush, threw himself down in front of "master," where he lay stretched out a full length ; each hand grasped one of master's ankles, and his face lay flat on his

RESUMES DUTY IN THE COOK-HOUSE.

shoes ; in this manner he lay quite motionless, occasionally emitting a low groan or howl. Master could not shake him off ; if he attempted it the grasp would become firmer and tighter, and the groaning much louder and more continuous. At last some of his comrades seize hold of him forcibly, unclinch his grasp, raise him rudely up, and give him a good shake. Supported by two big fellows each grasping a shoulder, he is now gently led back to the lines and seated upon his "hind legs" in the verandah ; he then rests his chin on his knees, clasps his arms round his shins, and commences to weep bitterly, where he is surrounded by quite a host of his friends and fellows, all endeavouring to console him. They are however reminded to "be to off their work" and master and Periya Karuppen are once more alone together, and face to face. The former now goes on the other tack, and tells him he can sit there till he is tired, but to-morrow morning he shall go up to the top clearing and *hole*, which he will find rather harder work than boiling rice. He leaves him sitting there, and returns to the bungalow : he must get into the cook-house, and see what like it is, but the door will not respond to his kick, because it is fastened, has been fastened by Periya Karuppen, in a way peculiar to himself and other Karuppens, the special peculiarity being that only those who fasten the fastening can undo it. And the way was this. A nail was knocked into the door near the edge about half way up, just where the handle would have been, put if a handle was to be put on ; opposite this nail another was hammered into the rough piece of wood that served as door, four inches in length, and was driven half way in quite firm. A piece of string or coir yarn was now wound tightly round those two nails, then crossways and cross-crossways, in the most remarkable manner, indeed it would be quite impossible for one not in the secret to undo it. In vain we finger away at the rope : it will not untie, so it must be cut ; we turn round, to go into the bungalow for a table knife to do the deed : and see standing close by—Periya Karuppen ! Not a word is spoken, but he steps to the door, gives a few turns and twists to the string—and the door is open. Periya Karuppen disappears inside, and we disappear into the bungalow. On coming out into the verandah, a quarter of an hour afterwards, the cook house door is not only standing wide open, but volumes of smoke rising out of the roof. Periya Karuppen has evidently commenced his old work, so we quietly go out to ours, and say nothing. At breakfast we come in as usual, and the curry and rice is brought. Nothing is said on either side.

“ ONE PROPER SERVANT.”

No signs at all that anything usual had happened.

But, as Periya Karuppen was not a professional or trained servant, only a cooly taken from the lines, we will now give a brief description of his successor, who was a Sinhalese young man, named Pieris, and who, to our various inquiries, on engaging him, briefly replied, “He was one proper servant, and quite different from other people.” On expressing a hope that his ability in cooking was different from our last servant’s, and wish to know what he could do in that line he said he could cook anything, everything—steak, curry and rice, and plantain fritters. We afterwards found out these three dishes were his own idea of everything. The curry and rice was very good and, so were the plantain fritters, but the same could not be said of the beef-steak. He would slice the beef up into pieces about a quarter of an inch in thickness, then lay them down on the kitchen table, and with a heavy mallet of wood, commence to beat and hammer at it until it was all bruised and smashed; this was to make it soft and tender. While this beating of the beef was going on it served as a very good intimation of about what time dinner might be ready, indeed it was heard at a great distance off, and often when out with our gun, along the jungle edge, looking out for jungle-fowl coming out to feed in the coffee, have we been reminded of the approach of our own feeding time, by the warning sound of the smashing of the beef-steak, which was just as good, and answered the same purpose, as a warning bell, a quarter of an hour before dinner.

After the beef was well beaten, it was put into a fryingpan and fried until it was quite hard, with a little lard; as this was seldom on hand, the more common material in use would be coconut oil. Our readers will not require any further information, they will be quite prepared to understand that the beef-steak resembled more a cinder soaked in coconut oil than what it was called, and we have even yet quite a distinct recollection of never attempting to masticate the steak: it was just cut or torn into small pieces, a few chips made in it with the knife—and bolted, the only taste it had was of coconut oil. The beef-steak would probably be left untouched, and dinner made off the curry and rice, and fried plantains. But what matter, it would appear for breakfast next morning under a different aspect. It would be chopped up into minced collops, without either taste or flavour of meat, and had it not been for the abundance of pepper and other spices with which it was flavoured, we might just as well have eaten a dish of heated sandust! Indeed for all we knew to the contrary it was quite possible that

A WATCH STOLEN.

Pieris might have taken all the beef himself—and served up for his master's meals minced meat made out of sawdust, highly seasoned with pepper, chillies, cinnamon and other spices.

One morning we were rather late for cooly muster, and went out somewhat hurriedly; after the people were told off to work, we became aware that our watch was forgotten. So we return to the bungalow. On coming in sight of the verandah, Pieris is observed very busy sweeping it out, a very unusual occurrence; we proceed straight to the bedroom, to the place where the watch was left, but no watch was there. Now, if we were sure of anything it was this, that the watch was looked at in the morning, and, as it was late, we had hurriedly gone away, and forgotten to put it in the pocket. Pieris was called, and asked what he had done with the watch; not a muscle of his countenance changed while he declared he had never been in the bedroom. "Did not master see him sweeping the verandah?"

Just then, some half-a-dozen of coolies were passing the bungalow, on their way to work, in a dreamy listless state, with their heads enveloped in cumblies, double-folded, as if they were suffering from a severe cold, or, provided the bare legs were not looked at, hooded up, like the "monks of old." On being called into the verandah, and our difficult position explained, and on its being also explained they would have to escort Pieris off to the police station and help master to tie his hands, how they did brighten up. You would not have known them to be the same men, their cumblies were thrown off, and bound round the head, turban fashion, shoulders bared, clothes tightened round the waist. One seized hold of an old broom, another the stick of an old umbrella, and the others, for lack of weapons, and seeing it was an urgent case, pulled two sticks out of the garden fence. All now shouldered arms and stool bolt upright in the verandah. It promised to be a grand spree for them, for coolies dislike the Sinhalese. But they were disappointed.

Having called Pieris into the bedroom, he was told it was useless wasting any time in talking. The ultimatum was—"Deliver up that watch, or you are handed over to these coolies, to be marched off to the police station." At the same time, from a corner of the verandah, some skeins of coir yarn were handed to the coolies, who commenced to twist it up into a strong rope, and Pieris had a hint that his hands would shortly be tied up behind his back, unless that watch was very shortly delivered up. Pieris was now in great perturbation; he examined all the bed, under the pil-

ON THE WATCH.

low, under the mattress, under the bed, he even put his finger into some large rat holes, about the corners of the room, and said the rats must have run off with it. Our reply was: "Time's up. Come out into the verandah and be tied up for your march; the ropes are ready." On hearing this, he frantically pulled out the dressing-table drawery and says, "Master, look," and inside the drawer, sure enough, ticking away in calm repose, lay the watch! The watch was found, much to our joy, and the coolies dismissed to their work, much to their sorrow!

We saw through the whole affair at a glance. When absent at muster, Pieris had put the watch in the drawer, and if, as was customary, we had gone out with the coolies over the hill, both Pieris and the watch would have disappeared, and never more been heard of, and the reason he was so unusually busy sweeping the verandah was to watch master's motions.

The affair of the watch put us on the watch. So one Sunday Pieris was sent down to make some purchases in the bazar, and told not to tie up the kitchen door, as he would be at home all day, and would require a fire-stick occasionally. After he was fairly gone, we made a thorough examination of the kitchen, but found nothing, only a good big strong wooden box belonging to Peris, which was locked. We all know what sort of locks some of these people used to have, and perhaps still have, on their boxes; any key that will go into the hole and turn round will unlock it, so we pull out our own bunch of keys, and try them on the lock. One won't go in, another is too small, another turns round and round in the lock, we are beginning to despair, when the next opens it with a click, just as if it had been made for it. The box was well filled, shirts, pocket handkerchiefs, under flannel shirts, in fact a miscellaneous supply of everything, and all our property! and if there could be any doubt about it that was solved by the marking of the initials in the corners.

The box is locked, and we keep our own counsel. On the return of Pieris nothing at all is said on the subject. The next morning, after muster, a cooly is sent off to Pus-ellawa for a policeman, privately. On his arrival the whole circumstance is explained, upon which, two coolies are called to the bungalow as witnesses. Peris, who is sitting smoking in the kitchen, is suddenly pounced upon, and ordered to open his box, which he refuses to do, and is extremely indignant. The key however is dangling from his waist belt, and is taken by the constable, who opens the box and reveals all. Pieris now bewails his hard fate that some enemy must have done this to ruin him, for he had not looked into that box for many a

"THREE MONTHS' HARD LABOUR."

day ; he even insinuated that master had sent him down to the bazar and then filled his box with the clothes in order to put him in jail ! What an unfortunate man he was : everything was against him ; no one would believe him. But it would not do. The constable took him up to the Nuwara Eliya Court, where we appeared next day, with the witnesses, and the sentence was, "Three months' hard labour, and imprisonment," far too light a sentence for breach of trust of one in a responsible position, which very probably also involved the opening of lock-fast places.

Some have said to the writer, "What a fertile imagination you must have to concoct all these little stories, for it is quite impossible you can remember all these little incidents after such a long lapse of time." But we would just appeal to those of our readers of the same age, or even older, if it is not the case, that while many, perhaps important, events in their lives, which happened ten or a dozen years ago, are quite forgotten, those that happened in early manhood and life never are. How often do we hear old people delight in telling tales of their early days, which they do with minute vividness, while what happened yesterday is quite forgotten ! The mind and memory on our first start in life is like a sheet of white paper : it takes on and retains the first impression, which no after crossing can eradicate ; on being first launched forth into the world, all is novel, all is new, it is stamped there and there it remains. Hence the importance of early and correct training. If this is done, however far one may wander from the right way, there is not only a good hope, but a fair prospect, of his return, when he comes to himself ; and so, it is not only your first sweetheart (if you have had more than one), your first pound note, and your first servant, that you remember, but also the first of everything, that is if it eventually leads to any important act, or position in life. Per'ya Karuppen may be even alive still on some of the estates, like his first master a grey-headed man. If he is asked "Who was your first master ?" and shakes his head doubtfully, sits down on his legs, and rests his face on his knees, say, "Why, your master was baptized a periya durai. He was a P. D. before he ever came to Ceylon, and is a P. D. yet." A light will break over his withered face, as he murmurs "P. D. MILLIE."

CHAPTER XXIX.

ON THE STAFF.

Is this expression, so very common a one in olden times, now become obsolete ?* We have not heard it

* It is still the delicate euphemism for being "out of a berth."—ED.

“ON THE STAFF.”

used for a very long time. It is, or was, a very expressive term, and simply meant, a superintendent out of a berth. It has, in a previous chapter, been remarked that, on making inquiry as to the whereabouts of some old acquaintance, the reply has been, “Gone home,” but in these times it was much more frequently “Gone on the staff”; “promoted to a staff appointment”; not the sort of promotion to provoke any emulation, or to give the authority at head-quarters a plain hint, that one was neglected in the calling, and you were expecting to be presented, on the very first opportunity, with the staff—in other and plainer words, with your walking-stick. Like many old sayings, this has a meaning, one which perhaps not all of our readers can comprehend in its full signification, but the explanation is easily given, and it is this. When a superintendent lost his situation, he set about visiting all his friends and acquaintances in the various planting districts. He visited and remained with one friend until they got mutually tired of each other’s company. He would then “cut his stick,” took his staff in his hand, and started off to some other bungalow, where he would be received, and lounge about, on the look-out for any opening that might present itself, and, if no situations were vacant, or likely to be, many a bungalow in many a district was visited by the gentleman “on the staff.” Now, the hospitality of planters amongst themselves and towards strangers always was, and still is, quite proverbial, but it is a very different case altogether, when a gentleman on the staff visits you for some indefinite period of time, not for the sake of social friendship or regard, but merely for the sake of board and lodging. He does not come to see you out of any regard for your friendship: on the contrary, nothing would give him greater pleasure than to take his departure, take a final leave of your bungalow, your hospitality, and yourself, at the earliest possible notice, provided he had the chance of securing a bungalow for himself, in having the offer of another situation. If he remains in your bungalow for any length of time, he becomes indolent and lazy. When you come in for breakfast he will be just getting up, or half dressed, in shirt and trousers. He may have made an inroad to your bedroom, for the benefit of your razor, hair oil, combs, or brushes; he will remove your soap, take your towels, go out, have a bath under the spout, and, after scrubbing himself well with them, hang them up on your rack, and you, quite unconscious of what has taken place during your absence, when washing before breakfast, and attempting to dry your hands and face with a wet towel, will not be successful, and go out into the back verandah

THE "BOY" AND THE "VISITOR."

and blow up the boy for putting a wet towel on the rack. He will walk about the room and verandah barefooted, and when his feet get cold go into your bedroom, and put on your slippers. Now, all this sort of thing would be thought nothing of in a casual visitor for a few days, just once in a way, but it becomes tiresome when it gets the rule. Your servant will have no love for your visitor on the staff, because he has double trouble and work, in attending to an extra bedroom, extra cooking, and service in general, and he knows very well, when he takes his departure, if ever he is going to do so, two rupees will not tinkle into the palm of his hand, because there are none to tinkle. The boy knows very well all the circumstances of the staff officer's case, a great deal better than his master, for all the "outs and ins" of the affair have been duly retailed and discussed in the kitchen, all the little facts, both sides of the subject, whereas "the master" has only as yet had his visitor's report on the matter. But your servant will make up in some other way for all his extra trouble. Supposing the staff officer feels *low*, which no doubt he often does, what more natural than to open the side-board and take a small *nip* from the black bottle, just a thimbleful? The boy is in the back pantry and sees him: in fact the action is very probably just what he has been watching for; he is all right, so, watching his opportunity, when unobserved, he makes a dart at the side-board, takes the brandy bottle into the pantry, and pours out a good quantity into a tea-cup for his own personal use, either at present, or after hours. Again, watching a fitting time, he makes another dart and replaces the bottle. When the master comes in from work, in the afternoon, he goes to the sideboard for a little refreshment, and, to his astonishment, the brandy bottle, which had only had one glass taken out, the evening before, is now three-fourths empty; he is indignant, and at once steps out into the back verandah, to have some conversation with the boy on the subject. The boy had fully expected this, and was quite prepared, and he at once states, "Master's friend had drunk the brandy; he had seen him." So the master, in an off-hand sort of way, just says to his visitor:—"I sometimes suspect my servant of taking my liquor. Now I don't mean any offence, far from it, but I would just like to know if you took any brandy to-day in my absence." His visitor would say that he had just taken a nip. So his host would say nothing, but be under the idea that he had taken a rather large one, and would watch him narrowly for some time, but could see no effects of liquor. "He must have a strong head to

EXTRA SUPPLIES.

stand half a bottle of brandy, and it never be noticed !

The boy would take advantage in the same way in ordering some supplies. We all know that two can live together comparatively much cheaper than one, because there are many little things requisite and necessary to prepare for one which would likewise answer well for two. The master, when filling in the pass-book, with the boy at his back, stating all his requirements, would pause and look up, in mild remonstrance. "All this beef. What? Sugar and tea all done. You had a pound of tea and twelve pounds sugar three days ago. This will never do." The reply will be prompt and decided: "Master forget master's friends." The master himself would in all probability have some sort of feeling, always to have plenty of something for the credit of the house; if he was alone, anything would do for him, he could easily make a shift. So he would write in accordance with the boy's dictation, and the surplus was his perquisite, and thus was he made up for all his extra trouble and the lack of the two rupees which the staff officer did not put into his hand, when he took his departure. But the one great objection the boy had to the gentleman on the staff, was, that he was always in the house, lounging about with his eyes and ears open. What if the visitor should quietly notice all the little peculiar habits of the servant, and report them to the master! But, if the visitor had any wisdom at all, he would refrain from doing this, depend upon it; in the end he would have the worst of it, and his position be made so very uncomfortable that he would be fain to resume the staff. Now the boy, when, after breakfast, he saw master disappear over the hill, knew very well he had the rest of the day to himself. That is to say if there were no visitor in the bungalow. So, he would put on his turban, take his paper umbrella, and go down to the bazar to have a gossip, or, if that was too far, he would visit the lines, and lounge away a few hours talking to the absent coolies, or making love to the ladies: very probably a direct and mutual understanding would exist, that a lady would stop absent from work on the plea of having a severe headache, or heartache, and that the gallant boy would pay her a consolatory visit, after master had gone to work. Now, he could not do all this, and a great deal more, such as shutting up the kitchen door and going to sleep, for the visitor might suddenly disturb his slumbers by calling out for a fire-stick, or some tea or coffee, for he must not only be always on the spot, but on the alert, and awake, in case he should be called, for any purpose; these were some of the objections he had to the gentleman on "the staff."

THE SPARE BED-ROOM.

Sometimes, he would try to "pump" him as to when he was going away. He would suddenly stop in his work of sweeping the verandah, rest on his broom, and say : " Why does not master take a situation ? A proper master like you can surely get the very best place you choose to ask for. Why don't master go to Kandy, and ask a place from some of the periya durais ? The periya durais surely cannot know master wants situation ; if they did, master would get plenty of letters ; indeed, not know which place to take, for is it not very well known, no master take such trouble, and do such hard work, and very cheap also, as master." And so on. Now, however much one and all of us may protest and inveigh against flattery, we would just appeal to one and all, that although, of course, we see through and understand all this talk of the boy's as being merely gross nonsense, and spoken only in the spirit of eastern flattery from a subordinate to a superior, yet it is human nature, and one has no objections to have his ears tickled. How often have we read of some of the greatest of men as having stooped, demeaned themselves, and been led into foolish actions, simply from flattery ; and if such is, or has been, the case with wise and great men, how can we expect a poor staff gentleman, only an ex-coffee planter, to be exempt from it ? In thinking over the matter, a good deal of truth seems under the boy's suggestion, but, suppose he does go to Kandy, how is he to live there ? He would have gone long ago had it not been for this formidable objection—it would cost him well on to a pound a day living in a hotel ; he can't afford that, and he has no friends in Kandy, at least none who would receive a gentleman on the staff.

A good many planters' bungalows in these times had no spare bed-rooms. The visitor or visitors just took a couch in the sitting-room and went into master's bed-room to wash and dress. Even if there was a spare bed-room, one in the position of a staff officer could hardly expect it to be allotted to him. The spare room must be kept open for more distinguished visitors, gentlemen who had a bungalow of their own, and could ask you back again in return your hospitality. The assistant on the staff would therefore be very plainly told he must content himself with a couch in the sitting-room, to which he would no doubt reply, that anything was good enough for him.

He would be late of turning in at night, sit up and read, or walk up and down the verandah smoking. What was the use of going to bed ? He did not require to get up in the morning, besides he had indulged in a good deal of sleep during the day, and

A BAD CUP OF COFFEE.

was not at all sleepy. So his host would retire, and leave him, if he chose, to trim the midnight lamp. He would sit up until the oil in the tumbler was nearly done, and the lights began to touch the water underneath. We know—all planters have experienced—the disagreeable crackling noise the lamp makes, when it reaches this stage, noise which is a premonitory warning that sudden darkness will be at hand. The host himself, inside his own room, would perhaps be awakened a couple of hours after he had gone to sleep, with the crackling of the expiring lamp in the next room, and not be able to go to sleep again, for the strong smell of the oil wick came over the partition wall, for there was no ceiling, and it made him very uncomfortable.

The crackling of the lamp, to the visitor himself, was just equal to a bell for bed, for at the first crackle, knowing there was no time to be lost, if he wished to “turn in” with light, he would off with his coat and trousers, throw them on the table, give his shoes a kick off, and raise his socks also on to the table; he slept in the same shirt he wore during the day, for a staff officer in light marching order could not be expected to cumber his baggage with unnecessary luxuries in the shape of night-shirts. At daylight, the host would be up and stirring about, calling out for coffee. This was hurriedly brought in the dull grey of the morning, and placed on the table, by the boy. The planter would come in and draw in a chair to the table, opposite the coffee-pot. But he had hardly tasted the coffee, when he would bawl out “Boy! This coffee is bad, smells badly.” The boy would approach, look curiously, no doubt, wondering, for he had his coffee in the kitchen *first*, out of the same brew, and considered it particularly good. As light broke into the room, the condition of the table, and all the clothes upon it, now became apparent. The boy would then slowly say, “Sir, coffee very good, bad smell is not the coffee, it is master’s clothes, master’s socks,” and sure enough the table presented all the appearance of a dirty clothes rack, or as if the dhobi was having the dirty clothes counted out!

The master “flared up,” made a sweep over the table, and tumbled all the dirty clothes off, and over the head of the occupant of the couch, who merely gave a sort of sigh of satisfaction, and turned on his other side. “This will never do,” said the host, who was now walking up and down the room, coffee cup in hand, occasionally taking a mouthful of what was now very good coffee. But “there’s many a slip ’tween the cup and the lip.” Just as he had pronounced the coffee very good, he stumbles over his visitor’s shoes, trips,

A LOAN OF £10.

down goes the coffee cup with a crash and smash. The noise and disturbance even disturbed the occupant of the couch, who raised himself half up, and very indignantly declared, if this noise was to continue, he could not sleep. The reply, rather abruptly, of the departing host, would be, "Don't put your filthy clothes on the table any more." At breakfast time little or nothing would be said, both gentlemen feeling that they were on the brink of a quarrel, and it merely required an opening of the conversation to bring it on. In fact, if both gentlemen would tell the truth, they wished to quarrel, but neither would be the first to bring it on. The host could not: he had not the heart to commit a breach of hospitality, and vent his ill-temper upon a guest, especially a poor fellow who was "hard up." It was a great shame, no doubt, but he would wait, and speak kindly to him, when he was in temper. The visitor, on his part, considered himself very badly used. he would not have been treated in this way, if he had not been "on the staff." It was evident, he would never have had his dirty clothes tumbled over his head, unless his host had considered him a dirty fellow, and that his clothes and himself were fitting company! But then, on a calm reflection, how could he quarrel with his friend, who had been so kind to him. It was impossible: he would go away, take the boy's advice, and go to Kandy, if could only raise a five pound note. In the course of the evening, he mentioned to his host his wish, to see if anything was to be got by visiting Kandy—or even Colombo, and, would he lend him ten pounds? The host, had for some time been pretty well aware that it would come to this at last, and was not at all surprised, in fact, he was rather glad the request was *only* for ten pounds. Even if it was never paid, he would be a gainer eventually, by lending it, for the money, or the value of it: would soon go in the food he consumed: gentlemen on the staff have such appetites. Besides, so long as he was his debtor for the money, there was not much chance of his ever coming back again; for it is a well known peculiarity of debtors, however much, at the time they receive a little obligation, they may profess a lifelong gratitude, and not know their creditor. Can it be, that they have such a kindly regard for his feelings as to do injury to their own, in keeping out of his sight? *His feelings*, which might be hurt by the sight of the man who owed him ten pounds. What a kind and considerate debtor! He will waive all his former friendship, all his old good fellowship, utterly sacrifice it at the shrine of friendship: he owes him ten pounds and will keep out of his sight.

“YOUR DEBTOR FOR EVER.”

So his host lent him ten pounds, in return for which little accommodation most profuse professions of gratitude were tendered. “Although he would be sure to repay it out of the very first month’s salary, whenever he procured a situation, which could not be long now, “still he would remain his debtor for ever.” His host replied he fully believed him, but so dull was he, that he did not take in the quiet sarcasm contained in these few words, thinking in all simplicity that a very high compliment had been paid him, and so on his departure on shaking hands with his worthy host, he repeated the asseveration, “Your debtor for ever.”

In these times there was only one hotel in Kandy, the Royal, subsequently in later years occupied as a store by K. D. & Co.

How the gentleman “on the staff” got to Kandy is unknown: it may be he would remain all day at some of the country resthouses and walk during the night, or he might even get into some bullock bandy for a small consideration, and lie comfortably concealed amongst the straw, jogging along at the rate of two miles an hour, for if time is no object and one has patience to endure the monotony of the journey, moving along in a bullock bandy is a very pleasant and cool mode of travelling; it is very cool: the covering of coconut-tree leaves most effectually keeps out the heat of the sun, and being open before and behind a pleasant draft of air, even on the hottest day, generally passes through the cart. But whether he walked or tipped a few coppers to a cart driver to give him a lift will never be ascertained, because either course of proceeding would be considered rather undignified for a gentleman of his position, even although he was only “on the staff,” and he was never heard to speak on the subject. In carrying on the story it is sufficient to state that late in the evening he entered the front verandah of the “Royal”; there was no one in the verandah, so he sits down on one chair, draws in another, on which he stretches out his legs, and thus remains for a considerable time absorbed in thought. He now feels hungry, gets up and peeps through the window, and if he was hungry the sight that now presents itself makes him thirsty. The room was filled with a whole lot of fellows sitting round the table, on which stood bottles of claret, bottles of champagne, tumblers of brandy and water, glasses of sherry standing beside small black pint bottles, pipes, tobacco, and cigars, all lying about and the conversation so general and very earnest, that he might almost have walked in and helped himself to a drink, and never be noticed, but he did n’t. He reasoned with himself that one in such

ON THE STAFF IN KANDY.

a very critical financial position, must be careful, very careful. If he went into the room there would be sure to be some who knew him, or if not they would soon make his acquaintance. They would push a bottle and glass towards him. "Tired, eh? Have a drink?" So of course he would. He would accept of the very generous proffered hospitality, for he was very thirsty, but what would it lead to? As the bottles and glasses got empty, they would begin and look all round, and then stare at him, as if they expected something; if he did not take the hint, some more forward than the others would cry out, "Ain't you going to stand a couple of bottles of champagne all round? It's your turn now." So, as he had partaken of their hospitality, in accordance with the rules of the service, he must return it, and he could not afford it. True, Segar would give him tick, but he was not going to commence so soon, he might be forced to it at last for his curry and rice, and he would not willingly commence it with champagne. Having come to these very wise and sensible resolutions, he also resolved that the sooner he went to bed the better; some of them might come out into the verandah, see him, and ask him, nay pull him in, and then wouldn't he be in for it? So he quietly walks round the east end of the house, towards the kitchen apartments, where the landlord had his own sitting-room, round to the back verandah, adjoining the stable-yard, and accosts one of the appus, stating that he wants a room; luckily he can be accommodated, and is shewn into a very small one in the corner of the west verandah. He now tells the servant to bring him into his bed-room a cup of tea, and a sandwich, who returns and says, he is requested by the landlord to state that it is the custom for visitors to be served with their requirements in the public room, and that bed-rooms are only intended for sleeping in. The landlord was evidently offended at the modest request for tea, &c. Had he ordered a bottle of champagne there would have been no remarks passed about the bedroom; the next morning he was confirmed in this belief, as, through the canvas walls that divided the rooms, the popping of many a cork was heard. The landlord had evidently forgotten his statement of the evening before, but perhaps he was not up, and this was an infringement of the rules of the house, without his knowledge or consent, perhaps and perhaps not. What can the gentleman on the staff do? He is afraid to go into the public room, from upright honest motives, previously explained; he is refused refreshment in his bed-room. So he bribes the servant. "Appu," says he, "get me this tea and sandwich, quick, and there is a rupee for yourself," slipping one into his hand. The appu says not a word, not even "Thank you," but retires into the

HOTEL BILLS:

cook-house, from which he shortly emerges with buttered toast, sandwiches, and hot tea; he is very polite, walks up and down the verandah, looks in and hopes it is good, and after it is done, "Would master like any more?" "Yes," is the reply, and more is supplied. Our staff officer then goes out into the stable-yard, sits down on a horse bucket and smokes a pipe, after which he turns in and in spite of all the noise and turmoil in the public room, which is kept up the whole of the night, he soon goes to sleep and wakes up in the morning all right, which he would not have done, had he gone into that public room on his arrival. After breakfast next day, there were a great many departures: in fact the hotel was quite empty. Superintendents coming from the bank with money sealed up in small bags ordering their horses, box coolies, and settling their bills, in some way or other; if they thought their allowance was exceeded they would just say, without looking at the bill, "I'll be in next month; let it lie over." Of course gentlemen who settled their bills in this way were not on the staff. A poor staff officer would have to make some prior arrangement, and obtain leave to open an account. It is a very easy thing anywhere in the world to get credit, provided it is pretty generally known or supposed, that you do not want or require it! How very strange, that when one wishes to pay his bill, he is told "Your pleasure, sir, but there is no hurry; we can wait, prefer it even." But if you are "hard up," and are honest enough to say so, in fact that really you cannot pay, the landlord or creditor of any sort will insist upon your performing a moral impossibility and say you "must." If hotel-keepers were not suspicious, they ought to have been, of men taking away bags of money to the estate, and not paying their bills. Why did they not pay them? Was their own pay not also in that bag? It was, if they had not overdrawn it, or had more pressing claims of longer standing against them. The superintendent who went for money, and did not pay his hotel bills, was always heavily in debt.

In fact it was gross dishonesty, because the estate allowed him his expenses, which used to be charged at one pound a day; when he delivered over the money, or sent in his accounts, these expenses were always charged, although in many instances they had not been paid. It may be asked how could he charge his expenses, when he had not taken over his hotel bill. Hotel bills had nothing to do with it, although it was understood, when you charged your expenses, that hotel bills were paid. You did, insert hotel bills in the account, although, when we look back on these

AT THE ROYAL HOTEL.

times, we think it would have been well for both proprietors and superintendents, had this been insisted upon, just the same as a copy of any other account as a voucher for the charge. What exposures! We perfectly recollect of a superintendent, a neighbour, who was challenged by his periya durai, for charging excessive expenses "going to Kandy," and was asked for a rough statement of particulars, and his hotel bill, but this would have been too great an exposure. He refused: "such a demand was without precedent," it was "unusual," tantamount to a question of his honesty, he would not; a dispute ensued and he threw up his situation rather than shew his hotel bills! He could not remain in the employment of one who was so mean as to ask to see a hotel bill. Now, when we think over these times, it seems what a grand thing it would have proved, had proprietors and agents, instead of allowing expenses to Kandy, insisted upon the hotel bills being charged in the accounts with copies attached. What a strange appearance it would have presented, that one who breakfasted and dined 29 days in the month on salt-fish or pumpkin curry and rice, washed down with a cup of tea, should deem it necessary to indulge in so many expensive luxuries when he went to Kandy. No doubt, however, the low diet and generally bad food which was prevalent on the estates only tended to foster and encourage these outbreaks, which periodically took place: it was the re-action, the bent bow broke loose. Nevertheless a good deal of evil might have been prevented, or at all events checked, had hotel bills been handed in, the same as any other account.

If one stepped into the Royal Hotel about noon, it could be told at a glance who was, or was not, on "the staff." Those who were not would be busy about something, getting out their box for a start, coming in from the bank with money, or out making purchases; those who were on "the staff" would be lounging about, with slippers, or without coats, reclining on the couch reading some old books or papers. If an arrival from the country took place, such as a planter riding into the stable yard, with a cooly behind him carrying a tin box, they would suddenly be all alive. Here is an arrival, last news from some of the planting districts. Perhaps some one got "the sack," and a situation is vacant; and the staff officers would begin to stir up.

Late on in the day, a planter rode into the back, yard of the Royal. He had on leech-gaiters, which, that morning when put on, had been white; now they were mud colour, or in a case our readers may say there is no such colour, we will say coloured or discoloured with mud, and such mud as only those

"CLEAR THE WAY."

know who have ridden the Dolosbage and Ambagamuwa bridle-paths in those days ; on his head was a hunting-cap with a thick white cover, which hung down like a flag over the neck and part of the shoulders ; in his hand was a good stout hunting whip, with a very long lash, the chief use for which was to keep off or at bay the paraya dogs, which, wherever one passed a native roadside hut, came out in troops barking and made no end of a row, so that if your horse was new to the country, and not as yet accustomed to this sort of thing, he would likely become troublesome and retire. Thus the good hunting whip with its long lash kept them off, and after a very short time the horse would become aware that, instead of the whip and its crack being his enemy, it was his greatest friend. The whip also kept at their proper distance droves of cattle and sheep which one sometimes met on the road ; it even sometimes touched up a lazy box cooly or horsekeeper. A timely crack, when meeting a string of bullock carts, was certain to make the drivers more active in clearing the way : in fact in many little ways the long hunting-whip was a useful and necessary article for the horseman to possess, whether he used it or not, for its crack, a premonitory crack, said plainly, "Forewarned, clear the way." The uninitiated used to laugh, and think this whip was just carried by the planter for a brag and bluster, to crack to make a noise ; no doubt some liked to do so, but it was not for this purpose it was carried. The planter, having seen his horse stabled, enters the public room amongst the staff officers ; regardless of his muddy state, he throws himself down full length on a couch, where he is nicely balanced by both his spurs sticking into the pillow at the bottom ! His hat occupies one chair, his hunting whip another. He shouts out "Boy !" who responds "Sar ?" the reply to which is : "A bottle of beer." Having rested for ten minutes and polished off the bottle he raises himself up, and some of the staff gentlemen draw him into a conversation, by asking the newest "news." Says he : "Why, old Stick-in-the-mud of the Seedy estate has got the sack and leaves end of the week ; fine estate, 300 acres, capital bungalow, got two rooms, and actually a small spare one in the corner of the verandah for visitors. However, the walls are neither plastered nor white-washed, but that is all Stick-in-the-mud's fault : he could have got liberty to do it if he had asked, but he does not care for that sort of thing. Kick-em-out and Company of Colombo are the agents. Fine berth : if I was not under an agreement would apply myself, fact, would," and he drinks off his beer, and calls for a fire-stick. The staff gentlemen now all disappear into their rooms, and a great

AFTER A BERTH.

many calls are made for the appu to bring pen, ink and paper, such an unusual occurrence that even the appu wonders what's up. By and by, they all take their hats and umbrellas, and go out alone, and the top of a letter would be seen, on close inspection, sticking out of their coat pockets, but no one speaks to another, indeed they all seem going different directions, but the very curious result was, that they all met at the post office, and they all posted a letter, and then they all laughed:—"What's the use of this deceit? We know all about it. One's chance is as good as another's. Whosoever gets it don't let us quarrel." So they retire to the Royal, and toss up who is to stand "sherry and bitters all round." The next morning at breakfast, the staff officer, the hero of our story, was not present. This created a talk, for the actions of the last arrival were always more freely criticized than any others. The appu was called and questioned, and the reply was "Up at four this morning, and gone to Colombo by the coach." Now this may seem a very simple and commonplace statement, but the gentleman on the staff did not seem to consider it as such; they all looked as if they had received some very bad news, and did not seem to care about any more breakfast. "Take away, boy. No curry; bring beer."

The day after the next, at half-past four in the afternoon, the Colombo coach drew up at the Royal; the gentleman who had so suddenly and abruptly disappeared entered the verandah; it just seemed as if his associates of the day before yesterday had never stirred from their seats: there they all were. He does not creep round by the end verandah now, and ask the boy for tea in his bedroom, he steps boldly into the public room, says he is tired and thirsty with the long dusty journey, and orders a pint of claret and some bread and cheese.

The loungers now become very restless and trembling, ask what the news down in Colombo was. "I heard nothing," says he, "being only a very short time there." They then make bold to ask if he had heard anything, if anybody had been appointed to the vacant situation on the Seedy estate. "Oh, yes!" says he, "that is all settled, the place is not vacant now. I am the superintendent!" They then all come forward and shake hands with him, saying they are so glad to hear it (!)! And surely he will stand a dinner all round, or at all events something to bring luck. "Bring luck!" says he, "Nothing will bring luck. Did any one, or anything, bring luck to me? If you want luck you must go and catch it as I did." "But how did you catch it?" they exclaim; "we all wrote, we all had an equal chance." Our lucky friend now

PERSONAL APPLICATION.

delivers his opinions on this, and they were these :—
“Writing letters is all very well in the usual routine of business or if time and expense is no object. But when there is any particular, very particular object to be attained or obtained like the one in question, there is nothing like a personal interview : in fact, the giver of the situation prefers it ; it does not require a man of good planting mould to write a letter. So they can't judge by the letter, but there is something in a personal interview which is very satisfactory to both parties, and, if any writing on the subject is advisable, it can be done afterwards. Again, at a personal interview, you are likely to have the matter settled at once and be done with it, for it is generally found that one letter necessitates another, and so on” and if in the meantime any better offerer presents himself it may eventually end in, “We are extremely sorry,’ &c. &c.”

Some may say the writer never was “on the staff,” he does not write from personal experience. But, although it is not generally known, we were once on the staff for three whole weeks ! And it was the most wearisome time we ever spent in the country ! We went and applied personally for a berth instead of writing a letter, and it was well we did so, for the proprietor, as he afterwards acknowledged, had written a letter giving away the place, it was on his table sealed and addressed already for posting, when the writer called, stated the purport of his call, went through a course of examination and questioning, and was engaged, while the letter on the table giving the situation to another was consigned to the flames ! If, instead of a personal visit, we had written, as the first impulse was, the reply would have been “The place is given away, too late,” because the letter would have been posted. Besides, is it not a very natural feeling for a proprietor or agent to wish or like to see the man who is to be entrusted with the charge of his property ? Put the question to yourself. Why should not a staff officer, also have some of the same sort of feeling with regard to his future employer ? Now, here were a lot of fellows with whom time was no object : they had nothing to do ; they did not know what to make of themselves, and yet, they would sit down and write letters and doze and waste two days until they got an answer ! The only just excuse would have been that they had not £5 to pay their coach hire, for it must be remembered, they were probably living at the Royal on credit. But it was more likely indolence and procrastination, for there were few even in those times who could not raise five pounds to go to Colombo and apply for a situation. The writer

“BOLTED.”

was once one of the few; he was not on the staff, but in these times was once very hard up. Once! Often, often! Particularly so on one occasion when he asked a very particular friend for the temporary loan of £5, which was refused. Gentlemen on the staff, take courage, when you are told that the loan of five pounds was once decidedly refused to

P. D. MILLIE.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE GENUS “BOLTER”: VARIOUS VARIETIES OF THE ORDER; INCLUDING THE ADVENTURES OF MR. SKULK IN SEARCH OF LAND.

“Bolted,” was the answer sometimes received, when asking after some one who had not been heard of for a considerable period of time.

If you had, or felt, no particular interest in the bolter, a long gossip would take place, discussing all the details of the case: “You never could have believed it.” “What are things coming to?” “What a world it is!” But, if the bolter had been a neighbour, or friend, and had availed himself of this social position to have borrowed a small sum, on the principle that what is the use of having a friend, or indeed anything, unless you make use of him, or it, you would feel as if a thunderbolt had struck you, or that you were compelled to bolt something very unpleasant, and if it did stick in your throat, and nearly choked you, nevertheless it must go down, be bolted; you knew perfectly well, at the first flash, that the small sum was gone for ever. So long as one was on a low salary, “on the staff,” or enduring any of the numerous ills of planting life, that was a prospect of payment being made at some period of time however remote, but of the bolter there was no hope whatever: it was an open and candid intimation that he had finally settled all his debts and difficulties. Not that the deed was open and candid, quite the reverse, or it could not have been carried out; it was the natural inference to be drawn from the actions, for the man who deliberately bolts is a thief,* and whoever expects

* We quite agree with Mr. Millie, and would add that not only do such thieves deserve to be denounced by name, but also those who aid and abet them, by getting them clandestinely out of the country.—Ed.

VARIETIES OF BOLTERS.

a thief to come forward in after times and say, "I stole a sum of money from you on such a date: here it is, principal and interest?" Bolters were of different varieties, of various grades, actuated by different motives, so we may briefly give a sketch of them, under their respective heads.

First, there was the bolter who had made up his mind to commit the action for a long time previously, but was in no hurry. He waited for the very first opportunity that could possibly offer, and in order to gain a good name and increased responsibility would be most particularly faithful and punctual in all ordinary small pecuniary matters. So much so, that he would probably not only be considered by his employers as a perfection of exactness and honesty, but held up to and represented to others, as an example well worthy of their imitation. This might go on for a long time, until the bolter's time and opportunity had arrived, a catch had represented itself, which would probably be the biggest available, he was gone, none knew when, where, or whither: his plan was too well concocted and carried out; or if they did become known, it was too late. To the greatest credit of the planting community, however, this class of bolters was very rare, and *now* we are happy to believe, is quite unknown. However, notwithstanding every precaution, the bolter would sometimes miss his bolt, and find himself "on the catch," or caught, for it is a strange fatality that evil deeds generally lay traps to catch the doers when they think they are closing and shutting them up.

A very long time ago, more than "thirty years ago," we have a dreamy recollection of an incident that happened which will confirm the truth of our remarks.

A superintendent, we forget his name and district, received a draft on Kandy for £600 for estate purposes. What more natural and proper than to pack up some clothes, and off for the money. He drew the money in Kandy, all in silver, had it packed up in bags, in the usual way, but, instead of returning with it to the estate, he and the rupees coach it, or travel in some way or other, in the opposite direction, down to Colombo. He takes up his abode at the hotel, and secures a passage in a vessel about to sail for some foreign part the next morning. He was to be on board that night; one might reasonably conclude no chance for his evil deed being discovered, for his absence from the estate would cause no anxiety at all: if thought of at all, it would be as a matter of course, just having the usual "spree" on going to Kandy. One would conclude, that common discretion, at least, would suggest itself to this bolter, the necessity of keeping as quiet as possible, but, on the contrary, what does he do, immediately on entering the hotel, but commence to drink heavily:

FAST LIVING.

glass after glass, bottle after bottle, were called for and drunk until he also became drunk. He then brings all the money bags, lays them on the couch, and opens them up; he then falls asleep amongst the rupees. He was lying on rupees, rupees were on the table, rupees were, on the floor: and this in the public room of a public hotel! Of course the landlord felt very uncomfortable, and did not know what course to adopt. He stepped out into the street to go and call some one to advise with, and just then the head of an agency firm was passing. The landlord asked him to come in, and give his opinion and advice on the matter: he went, he looked hard at the sleeping or drunken man, and harder at the rupees all scattered about the room. "Why," whispers he, "that is one of our superintendents. We remitted him a draft for £600 a few days ago, and there he is and there 's the money! Was he sober when he arrived? "Perfectly," says the landlord. "but as soon as he entered the room he commenced to drink, as I never saw any one do before it: astonished even me, who, as you may conceive, see a good deal of this sort of thing."

"Go out and bring a police constable, or better still, two. Also some witnesses," says the agent. This was soon done, the money was all collected and counted, and found to the exact sum, less Kandy bank commission, and coach hire, and was, of course, delivered over to its rightful owner, and the unconscious delinquent lodged in prison. We wonder what he thought, or what his feelings were, when he woke up. We cannot say what the result of this was, having no further recollection on the subject.

But this sort of bolting was so very rare, planned and plotted fraud and theft, that, although there may have been several other cases, we do not recollect them. One in more general use, we will say the second, was bolting under pressure of outward circumstances. These circumstances might or might not have been the result of foolish or injudicious conduct, which the bolter had personally brought down on his own head, but whether or not it shewed small spirit or pluck, even want of principle, in the man, so lost to himself as to resort to this extremity. Probably, while in a place, he had lived "fast," carelessly, and beyond his small income, with every good intention to pay his bills at some period. He would have scouted the very idea of doing that. In fact such a course of proceeding, or contingency, never ended his mind. His pay being small, and his debts heavy, he lost his situation, and, as a matter of course, his creditors were all "down upon him." Excuses and delays were exhausted, his only hope and last resource was in the procuring of a situation, and

seeing this hope, for the time being, was become utterly hopeless, in a fit of desperation he bolted.

A owed to B fifty pounds and paid it by a promissory note on, or at, the O. B. C. due in three months. B had a credit at the bank and a good name, he cashed the note at a small discount, and the money was spent. Three months passed away, and so did the remembrance of the transaction. But it was recalled to his memory in a rather unpleasant way, in receiving a letter from the bank, informing him the note was protested for non-payment, and charges were placed to the debit of his account, which was overdrawn, and an immediate adjustment of the same was requested. This request having been complied with, B receives the promissory note back again and finds himself just as he was, only minus payment of notary fees, and probably also a little bank interest. He sits down and writes a long letter to A complaining of the little affair, which had put him so much out. After the lapse of some time the letter comes back, endorsed "Not to be found"; on making further inquiry it was found he had left the country. Now this was a very mean thing for any one to do, and just shows what a hardening thing, and debasing to the general character, is debt. The proper course for A to have adopted, would have been boldly to have informed his creditor of his unfortunate and hopeless position, and bravely told him, if he succeeded elsewhere, he would pay up, that there was no chance of ever doing so by remaining here. B would see he was an honorable man, and enquire, what was the use of detaining him. None. Again, A owes B twenty pounds and gives him a promissory note for the amount, due at the O. B. C. in three months. A few weeks after the little transaction, A writes his creditor in a fair, open and very straightforward manner, that he is leaving the country, but that it will make no difference at all to B in the small pecuniary transaction, because his friend C has promised to take up and over all his debts, and see them all fairly settled. Now C is a man apparently of some substance and stability, and past all manner of doubt, very much better security than A, and B is rather pleased than otherwise at the transference. But to make sure he writes C on the subject, who replies that it is "all right." When A's promissory note become due, C takes it up. How do you think? Why, just by sending B another drawn in his own name, so that all the difference consists in B holding C's note instead of A's! Well, thinks B, it will come all right in the end, but it does not, for C, the man of some substance and stability has long been in difficulties himself, which hav,

"I PROMISE TO PAY."

come to a crisis so very suddenly that B has heard nothing about it, has never heard that he has been declared, or declared himself, insolvent, has passed through the court, and come out *whitewashed*, paying all his creditors a dividend of one shilling in the pound. B not having been aware of this state of matters, in fact, having heard nothing about it until too late, of course had made no claim and had of course not even received his twenty shillings, in place of twenty pounds. However he writes C, complaining bitterly of this treatment, and gets no reply at all, or, if he does, a very stiff formal one, stating that he (C) was not to blame; B should have made his claim. He is clear, and started afresh, and cannot take any notice of these old trifling affairs. B now considers the affair quite hopeless, and puts the note away in a back drawer, out of sight, but he cannot get it out of mind: in the instance it is not a case "out of sight out of mind," for, whenever he opens that drawer on any business whatever, that promissory note is sure to present itself to his sight, taunting him with the falsehood, "I promise to pay." He is "hard up," his creditors bother and threaten him, and all for a paltry twenty pounds. Yet there is a paper within his grasp most candidly stating that twenty pounds is his due, even promising to pay him the amount, notwithstanding which it is seemingly worth no more of no more use than just to light his pipe with. He can't stand this any longer, he tears it up, and consigns it to the flames. "Now," says he, "you'll torment me no more." Years pass away, when a name is mentioned that makes him start. A's name is mentioned as a fellow who did no good in Ceylon, but he seems to have been successful elsewhere, for they say, "He has made a lot of money at the Straits of Belleisle, where he had been a while." B now thinks he has been rather rash in the matter of the note, and wished he had kept it, but wishes won't bring bring back its ashes and restore time to the state of a protested promissory note! If wishes could redeem the results or every, or any, rash or foolish action, what a fine thing it would be, to be always in possession of a good stock of wishes, bottled up for all and every sundry requirements! But as wishes cannot do this, it is no use mourning and lamenting, making one's self miserable and unhappy by indulging in the very common lament. "If I had only known! Oh! I wish I had not done this or that!" Dry your tears, and act, for all the tears ever shed in the world will never compensate you, but a good sober matter-of-fact action may. Write, and explain the whole circum-

BOLTING TO CEYLON.

stances of the case; if he is an honorable fellow, he will pay you; if he is not, he will say, he is sorry, but if you will send the *note*, he will pay. If you have lost or burned the note, it is not his fault, he can't help it. If he is a blackguard, he will never answer your letter!

But if men bolted from the country to escape from pecuniary demands upon them, we are of opinion that far more frequently did they bolt to Ceylon, for the very same purpose, and they bolted from some of the Indian Presidencies. The coffee estates in the interior, with their walls of forest, presented a very tempting and secure refuge for the embarrassed debtor, or any one under dread of the law. It would not do for them to take passage and land at any of the frequented ports: they might, and no doubt would, be traced out, so the plan they adopted was to cross the straits in some native boat, landing at Point Pedro, or Trincomalee; they would then buy some wretched old pony, and ride down the north road to Kandy; they would take it easy, as time was no object, rest and sleep at some native hut during the heat of the day, and continue their stages in the early morning and late evening, or even during the moonlight. Arrived at Kandy, the immigrant bolter would keep as quiet and remain there as little time as possible; he would get quit of his pony as soon as he could, so as to leave nothing on "the trail"; if he could get a few pounds or shillings for it so much the better, if not it must just be abandoned, and he makes for the coffee districts on foot. If a man of education and some manner, what is generally called a gentleman, only however in manner and appearance he would get on very well, for a time. Of course he would give out, he was travelling on foot, *incog.*, to see the coffee districts. "He had heard a good deal about them, and some thoughts of investing himself, and took this very practical plan of gaining every information, although he did not wish it to be known. It might interfere with his present prospects, and future pension, if it came to the ears of the service that he was smelling after coffee. "Mum is the word," and he would give a knowing wink. "All right," says the hearty, honest superintendent, with no guile or deceit in his own heart, and of course suspecting none in the guest's. "All right, it will never be known from me, who you are, or where you have come from. What do you say now, to make the secret complete, give yourself a fancy name?" "My dear sir," says the immigrant bolter, "what a capital idea. I never thought of it, many thanks for the hint;

MR. SKULK.

just the very thing. What capital fun, quite a romance, so we will just arrange, that until further notice, I will call myself, and others will call me, Mr. Skulk, a new arrival, prospecting for land, in light marching order, like a regular greenhorn, as he is lost his portemanteaux, and all his clothes, and has to write to Madras for more, although when they will be here, if ever at all, over these wretched roads, it is impossible to say." Never mind Mr. Skulk, never mind, wherever you go, you will always get a change of raiment from your planting host, provided it fits you, or provided it is not too small; if too big, it can be managed, and as to appearance, that goes for nothing in the jungle, you know. And thus Mr. Skulk was fairly on the skulk, enjoyed himself exceedingly, and making himself very agreeable: in fact, before very long, he could choose his own host, for he received numerous invitations to "come over and spend a few weeks; there was a lot of fine forest in our district, which might perhaps suit him! Never mind his missing clothes and boxes, they would give him a change," and thus it so happened that Mr. Skulk took a change, whenever he felt in the humour to make one, but somehow or another he never could get a piece of land to suit him; he was particular: it was either too high or too low, too steep or too level, or when it was pointed out to him beyond the shadow of a doubt that it was neither the one nor the other, he would make a day of it, to have a thorough and complete examination, a very searching one, and come back late in the evening very much exhausted and disappointed, for it would not do, the soil did not come up to his ideas of what soil for coffee should be, and he was a judge, or at all events ought to be. His host then said, "Judge or no judge, I wish I had the money to buy it. I'd risk it." "My good friend," says Mr. Skulk, "in return for your great kindness and hospitality to myself, I would cheerfully lend you the money, at a very low rate of interest, but I am quite sure the land is altogether unsuitable, and it would be about the most unkind thing I could do, and a poor return for your hospitality, to put you on the road to ruin." Mr. Skulk had the "gift of the gab" and always settled every argument which seemed to be going against him, by excessive talking. He talked his adversary down, a very easy thing to do, when your adversary is a sensible man, because all sensible men feel and know it is no use arguing any point with your great talker, because his arguments are, as a rule, not reason and common-sense, but only talk. Perhaps, however, it

was not so much talking his adversary down, as that the adversary sees it is no use, who does not give in one bit, but merely gives up opposition, being tired of the tiresome talking and knowing that opposition is just adding fuel to the fire instead of putting it out, for the more you oppose your excessive talker, in order to silence or put to an end his talking, the more talkative he becomes! His character is at stake; you have dared to oppose and question him! He must explain, and explains away at such a rate, and gives such a number of explanations, that they all just pass in succession through the brain, which is very briefly and properly defined by "passing in at one ear and out at the other." Mr. Skulk was never at a loss, always ready; and his weapon was talk. After talking for a long time on the subject you had disputed, you had dared to question, without stopping for any reply, and just in the same run of talk, the subject of discourse would completely change, not once, but often, so that, when his argument about the land or rather which commenced with the land, came to an end, and he rapped his knuckles on the table, saying, "It's the best quality I ever saw," the hearer would be bewildered. "I say. I thought you were insisting a little ago it was bad, that land," Mr. Skulk would give another indignant rap, and say, "So it is, but it's rice, rice I'm speaking of just now."

In return for the hospitality of his host, Mr. Skulk would deem it necessary to give all manner of advice relative to the works going on. "You are all wrong in your mode of erecting buildings. Now that bungalow is just absurd. If you had only seen the one I built for myself, over on the coast. That was something like a bungalow." So he would talk you over, and, as he had nothing to do and understood all about it, he would amuse himself superintending the work. You might give him a trial, but his demands for coolies were so excessive, that the whole force on the estate was not nearly enough to meet his requirements, and you would be fain to exclaim, "Coffee even at 100/ will never stand this." He would casually state, he had once been in the Engineering or Survey Department, and that the road you had traced, and were cutting would never do. Just to oblige you, he would take a turn at the road tracer himself, and, as it was hot dusty work, he hoped you had plenty of beer. Having completed a short trace before breakfast, he would come in and consume that half-dozen of beer, which you had calculated would, on a pinch, last till next "coolie to Kandy day," bravely stating he had exhausted

himself in your service, and you must send off for more, before he could do another stroke of work. "Would you look at his splendid trace?" You would point out that it ran right through rocks and land-ships, and would never do, but he would explain, that was the work to be done in cutting and blasting, and that the tracer had nothing to do with this. He must stick to his gradients, but if you thought the cutting would be too expensive, he would overlook the land, to-morrow morning, to see if anything better could be done, provided, and provided only, you sent for more beer! You would say nothing. You had your plan ready. He was all ready early next morning, when you casually remarked, you had no time, or coolies to spare, to send for beer, upon which he would suddenly recollect, he had "slept badly last night," and thought it would be only common prudence to postpone the work. He would take a bath and turn in again and you turned out to work. On your return he would coolly tell you, he had been looking in the sideboard for a *nip*, and found there was nothing in the bottle, and so, knowing that *you* would require some refreshment, after *your* day's work, he had, all for your own sake, taken your pass-book, and entered one bottle brandy, and two of sherry, and, as that was not a load, he had penned the remark, "to fill up the load with beer." A scowl or frown would pass over your face, upon which he would say, "Don't be angry that he has not yet arrived, he will be here immediately, as I told him, it was your order, you were in a great hurry, and would give him a rupee if back within a stated time. Time about up; there he is, punctual chap. Now please hand over that rupee! Promise you know, and, must keep faith with the coolie. Master's word," &c. You would be in very bad humour all the rest of the evening, thinking what was to be done with this pest. At last an idea was hit upon, and put in practice, next morning. It was this. "Mr. Skulk," says the host very cheerily, "I am going away for a couple of weeks, now; in fact, perhaps for a month; it's the usual time of the year for taking a trip, and if it is not taken now we can't take it at all, dull work for you living here alone, so I suppose you will be O P H also." But Mr. Skulk, instead of becoming dull, actually seemed to brighten up at the prospect. "Dull?" says he. "Nonsense! The idea of me being dull? That's a good one indeed. My dear sir, just the very thing. Leave a memo of the works going on, and I will look after them; stay away as long as you like, the longer the better, make your mind perfectly eas-

BOLTING FROM A BOLTER.

and comfortable, I will keep everything right, let me alone for that; just the very thing. How lucky I did not leave last week, as at one time was my intention; and by the bye, as I am a stranger; here, people do not know me, and of course have no credit, just leave out your pass-books at the store, keepers: and bazar I will manage for myself perfectly well know quite well about all these little domestic matters. No fear of me," &c. and so on he rattled.

The host's temper was now up, his patience exhausted, but he said never a word. He packs up a box of clothes, and sends a cooly off with it, desiring him to await his arrival at Gampola. He send for the kanganies, and orders them no coolies are to be supplied to the visitor for any purpose whatever; he orders his servant that when present house supplies are done, which they will likely be to-morrow, nothing more was to be ordered, and on his peril was he to kill any of those fowls or chickens. That the visitor may remain as long as he likes, but he thinks it will not be very long, when he finds nothing to eat but bad curry ("be sure and make it as bad as possible") and rice, and nothing to drink but water. He even locked up all the pipes and tobacco, and, as his visitor was a great smoker, and always smoked his host's tobacco, this was the cleverest hit of all. What would he do!

The very next morning, early, before his visitor was up, our host was off. Bolted, from his own bungalow, as the very last dodge, to get rid of a *bolter*. Now, when when we think over this little incident, it was rather a weak and silly determination to arrive at, so to become a bolter himself, in order to get rid of a bolter: because, while putting the host to much inconvenience and expense, it is no way answered the purpose, for what cared the bolter for his host, it was the hospitality, and, if he got the latter without the former, perhaps it suited him all the better. Our worthy host had just put himself to a great deal of very unnecessary trouble and expense. and had he promptly and decidedly adopted the same course of proceeding at first, which he was afterwards obliged to take, it would have been better for both parties. In a day or two, Mr. Skulk sat down to a very simple dinner, curry and rice, and the curry was very bad. On questioning the boy, the answer was, "Master's away, no coconuts, no ghee, no nothing." The plate was pushed aside, and the order given. "Bring beer." There was none. "Very well, some brandy, sherry, anything will do." The reply was "No nothing, only water," and, as he spoke, the water rgleed out of the goglet, as the the boy poured it the nigu tumbler, and as he went out of the door,

A BOLTER GETTING IN SUPPLIES.

something was heard gurgling in his throat : what it could be was not difficult to say, because he had both hands flat up against his mouth ! Mr. Skulk's light dinner served to sharpen up his brain. He went to the pigeonholes above the office table, and looked at a hole ticketed " Kandy Accounts." He examined them, and at once saw who the shop-keeper was, with whom his host dealt. The next morning he tells the boy to speak to the kangani, and get two coolies to go to Kandy for supplies, but these functionaries, being quite well up to what was the game, reply that it cannot be done. " Master would be angry and punish them." Mr. Skulk is not to be beaten. He writes a letter by post to Mr. Raux, asking him to send up, hired coolies a number of articles, which need not be here specified, placing them and the hire to the debit of his host, and, as there were no postage stamps in the house (there were plenty, but all locked up), the double postage of this letter could be also " put down." In due time the hired coolies arrived, with the loads, took their receipt from Mr. Skulk, and departed.

In due time also the host turned up, and instead of finding that Mr. Skulk was starved out, and gone as he fully expected, to his astonishment there was his visitor still sitting at the verandah table smoking a cheroot ; on the table stands several black bottles, a tumbler, a goglet of water, and even what our host seldom saw in his own bungalow, plates of bread, butter, and cheese.

Mr. Skulk gets up, shakes hands heartily with his host, and now himself plays the host : " What will he take to eat and drink ? Don't be bashful ; there's plenty in the house " ; and he throws open the doors of the sideboard, and there are displayed rows of black bottles, jars of jam, cheese, potted meats, &c. The host inquires where has all this come from : " Have you had a remittance and taken this plan of shewing your gratitude for past favors ? " Mr. Skulk promptly disclaims all idea of shewing gratitude : that sort of thing is not in his line. " The fact is just this, knowing that you would be sure to be back soon and unexpectedly, I just took the liberty of a friend in laying in a stock of provender to welcome you back. Of course it is all at your own expense, and you may consider yourself lucky that I was here to do it. An old traveller like me, let me alone for foraging ! " " So it seems," said the host bitterly, " at the expense of others. I'll just tell you what what it is, Mr. Skulk, as we are having a tiff, I have had enough of your company, and you just walk out of this to-morrow morning, and that's plain

LOAFERS.

speaking, you understand," "Understand." says Mr. Skulk. "Perfectly, my dear fellow. Why did you not give me a hint sooner. Intended to have gone a fortnight ago but thought I was doing you a favour in remaining during your absence. Of course when two fellows live long together they are apt to get tired of each other's company and with a change, but I assure you this feeling is all on your own part, none of it on mine. The separation, since you insist upon it, is all of your own seeking, and should you feel dull after I am gone just drop me a note addressed Pussellawa post office, and wherever I go I'll write there for my letters. Will be sure to come back, whenever you like. Whenever you like, mind, and be sure and have plenty of beer. Good bye. Don't get dull. Back again, whenever you like, you know."

But the more numerous class of immigrant bolters were very low-class Europeans. It would be hard to tell where they came from, as of course you had only their word for it, which was utterly worthless. There would sometimes be seen wandering through the coffee districts, looking out for a situation as overseers or conductors. "Pay was no object; house accommodation and food, and anything else you chose to give." They seemed of no education, could scarcely read or write, and most certainly could not do up a check-roll. But if you were talked over into giving a very fair-spoken man a trial, a man who directed your attention to his feet—he had no stockings and the soles of his shoes just parting company with the upper leather, and, as a necessary preliminary before engaging at work, required a pair of your own cast-off shoes, no matter how bad they were, for the very worst you had were better than his—you might be perfectly sure, whatever his virtues or vices were, whatever his faults or misfortunes, that he was very likely the victim of, or at all events addicted to, drink. If you engaged him, watch him on this point, for if would soon "crop up." After a few days go close up to him at morning muster, when he was calling the names, and you would likely smell arrack. By and bye, he would not appear at muster, and send word he was sick. He would become very often sick. Sick, indeed! Sickness was the rule, and, even when he did come out, he looked very seedy and shaky, and avoided looking you in the face. But where did he get the arrack? how did he pay for it? Who can tell? Very probably some of the kanganies or coolies would give him a bottle at times; they would soon find out that was the most acceptable present they could give, and, as much as lay in his power, easy work would be his return thanks,

PROPRIETORY BOLTERS.

or he might borrow some small cash at times from some of the more simple coolies ; but whatever he did, or however he got the money, he would be sure to get the drink. But we will not enlarge further on this melancholy specimen of the immigrant bolter ; all of our old hands must have seen many specimens of them, and perhaps also a good many of the new.

We need say little about proprietor bolters, because their bolting was a different matter altogether, because they could not bolt to avoid paying their debts ; if they did, they must have been reduced to a very low ebb indeed, because they would leave something behind them that their creditors could 'bone,' or 'bolt,' only these genetlemen when they 'boned' and 'bolted' the coffee would sometimes find it rather hot, they could not stomach it ; and the hot coffee actually scalded their very hearts. They have found it infinitely more to their advantage, eventually, to have written off that sum of money as a dead loss, than to have 'boned' and 'bolted' the coffee. But somehow, if once boned and bolted, it could not be again 'thrown up,' it required a very strong emetic to produce this. If they could not get their principal out of the estate, why they would surely get its interest : they would go in for this. Under ordinary circumstances, a proprietor may bolt from Ceylon and nobody know until he is gone with a very easy conscience. Never mind his bills : if there is anything sure in this world, he may be sure of this, his unpaid bills will find him out. In fact his creditors will not lose, but gain. They will prehaps purposely defer sending their bills after him in order that they may have an excuse for charging that little item printed in small letters amongst flourishes ; and that item is "12 per cent charged after 3 months' credit." So, of course, a proprietor who leaves the country in a hurry or forgets to pay his bills is a capital investment "Landed security ; payment on demand ; interest 12 per cent." He may grumble and say, "Why did you not send it in ? How could I pay, when the account was not rendered ?" The only reply is, "Our terms of business."

The man who bolts from his debts is either a great blackguard, or a poor-spirited fellow. Of the former we will say nothing, we have no need to say anything, having no wish to know him, or anything about him, having no fellowship or sympathy with him at all. To the latter we would say. You have done an act from which you will never recover, go where you will. You may in some sense prosper, you may make a show in the world, even acquire the respect and esteem

"I FORGOT."

of others, provided they are ignorant of this escapade in your life, but that will never compensate for the loss of your respect and esteem. Your conscience will become easy, and you will begin to do many things now, that you would not have done before, had you made a push and paid that debt. It may not be too late yet. Do you owe money to any one, who may have considered that you bolted, and neglected or failed to pay him? It may be such a long time ago that you think he has forgotten the circumstances. Disabuse your mind of this vain hope, and know, if you never knew before, that a creditor never forgets the man who owes him money, and it is just the same *vice versa*, for however much we may hear, or rather however often we may have heard (a great deal too often), the debtor exclaim, 'I forgot,' 'I quite forgot' it is a falsehood. We believe, believe firmly, that no more does the debtor forget his debt than creditor what is owing him, and that this exclamation, 'I forgot' is just, in plain terms, a lie, and another of the degrading results of debt, in making one a liar. 'I forgot' easily said, simple words, but, if they are untrue, far from simple in their after results, insofar that they are just an additional brand and scar upon the conscience. One lie begets another, and the next one will be bigger, and leave a larger scar, and so on, all this hardening process originating in the small words 'I forgot.' Had you told the truth, and said, 'I can't' or 'could not' or even 'would not' far better than saying 'I forgot' what a very different man you might have been to-day! If one can't pay one can always tell the truth, or if it be inexpedient, not advisable, or unnecessary to tell the truth, or even any portion of it, you cannot be under any circumstances called upon, or justified, to tell or in telling a lie. Just tell the simple fact, that you are unable to pay; that is quite enough for the creditor: depend upon it, it is little or nothing he cares for the why or wherefore; the plain fact is quite enough, and perhaps more than enough, that you can't pay him the coin." The debtor, however bold and manly he may have been, always degenerates into a coward, he can't look you in the face. He lives in fear! The tappal-box delivers over no welcome letters to him. The tappal coolly presumes on his indifference, and always late. What matter? The box only contains bills, begging demands, or it may be, at times, a proctor's letter. "Ill news travels fast." Late as ever he may be, the tappal coolly arrives too soon! and an observant visitor at any of the coffee estates, if sharp in perception,

KEEP CLEAR OF DEBT.

might form a very fair general idea of his host, by the manner in which he receives the tappal cooly, and the bag. Many of our readers may not have thought of this, but let them take a hint now, and observe. For no two planters receive the post cooly and his letter-bag in the same manner or way. Some are always looking out for his arrival, and are in a sort of chronic misery until he turns up, eagerly snatch the bag from his hands, and actually break or burst the buckle or lock, in getting it opened. Others never see the post-boy, until he shoves the box into their hands. They take it in a mechanical sort of way, lay it down on the table unopened, turn round, as if they had forgotten all about it, and say, "Boy; a fire-stick." These are the two extremes, but there are numerous intervening ones with many different modifications. Our readers may think over this, and find them out.

Tell the truth, and have courage. We read not long ago somewhere the following quotation which impressed itself so on the mind, that (like Captain Cuttle) we took a note of it. Here it is:—"The fearful, those who always perceive, or think they perceive, a lion in the way, are not destined to fill any high position or station while alive, or be very long remembered after they are dead. Resolve to keep clear of debt, and you are all right, for such are the powers of resolution and perseverance, that without these qualities we can do nothing, accomplish nothing of any moment or account; with them, we will go through anything. The world is full of instances of the truth of this remark, and if we look sharply around, amongst our friends and acquaintances, we will find examples quite as striking and instructive as any that were ever published in, or read from, history." We may also add a personal remark. Not only keep clear of debt, but have a nest-egg as soon as possible: no matter how small the egg is, have a nest egg if there is no nest egg the bird may not return and lay another! It will not hold in any esteem the nest that cannot retain a nest-egg! But you must look further than the eggs. What is the use of a nest egg or a whole nest of eggs unless it or they hatch something? Now what do you expect it will hatch? You will be surprised now to hear that many a good coffee estate yielding a handsome income to its proprietor has been hatched out of the first nest-egg; or, at all events, taking a wider margin, if the nest-egg had never been there the coffee estate would never have been hatched, and this is our closing moral.

It is no use saying who Mr. Skulk was. The family were so numerous, that all old planters have met with some

CURRY AND RICE.

of its branches. But who was the host ! Who was the silly fellow who ran away from his own bungalow, to get rid of a "sneak." Why, he was just Mr. Green, who has been mentioned in a previous chapter. But he is not green now. Wouldn't he soon dress up Mr. Skulk now ! We all pay for experience ; they say "he is the best schoolmaster," but the fees are heavy. Say ! what is the use of saying what people say ! The fact has been proved by

P. D. MILLIE.

CHAPTER XXXI.

CURRY AND RICE.

Some of our planting friends may peevishly exclaim : "Shut up. Don't commence. We are sick, heart and stomach, of the subject. It recalls no happy or pleasant memories, but quite the contrary." But we won't shut up, and will commence, not a few passing remarks, but a whole chapter, at the very least on the three words of our subject. Why is this standard article of diet called curry and rice ? Why is the curry put before the rice : just as if the expression was meant to infer that curry was the principal diet, and rice the secondary, that rice was eaten to curry, and not as it is, curry to rice.* Perhaps few of our readers have thought of this idea. Think of it, and you will pronounce it right, and the next time you ask the boy what there is for dinner, and his reply is, "Curry and rice," correct him, and give orders that, in future, when speaking on this very important subject, he is to speak of it as rice and curry, and not curry and rice. "Important subject indeed !" you may reply, "where's the importance of a nasty dish of rice and a plateful of oily-looking stuff called curry ?"

Not so fast ; don't go off in a fizz. We grant it is of no importance to you, none in the slightest ; by all means make your meals off that very nice mutton and beef, which we have no manner of doubt is in your larder, it may be even, in fact we suspect it, cold fowl, ham, and (not or) tongue.

You may recollect, in a chapter published some time ago, a remark was made, asking where, or in what position would the planting interest have been, at this present day, without the Tamil cooly. Would the interest

* The natives give the priority to their staff of life, saying "rice and curry," or they go still further and say simply "rice."—ED.

SALT-FISH DINNER.

have been in existence at all, &c. You will, all at once, reply, "It would not, or at least anything like the same extent." Now, if this is admitted, which it must be, just take another step of inquiry and ask yourself, or, any other practical man, where would the Tamil cooly have been at this day without rice and curry? If you had no rice, or not enough to give him, he would never have come to your estate; it is very doubtful even if you or I would have had any estate at all. Leave out the question of pay and rupees altogether; much as the cooly loves them, he loves his rice better, therein shewing a point of wisdom and discernment, which had some of his betters in position, but not in common-sense, adopted they might have been alive at this day. But enough: we have all heard sad stories of the end of some, who starved and stinted themselves in food, to save money, and it is to be hoped, for their own sakes, there are none such now.

In carrying on the conversation with the boy on the subject of the anticipated dinner you might say you knew perfectly well before you asked that there was only curry—and rice, but your object in asking was simply to know what curry it was. And thus it happened that the curious planter got into the system of asking, not what was for dinner, but plump and plain to the point at once, "Boy, what curry is there to-day?" and the answer would be: "Salt-fish." "Salt-fish! Now have you not been told over and over again, that I am quite sick and tired of that salt-fish? Why for the last fortnight there has been positively nothing else. Get something else." But the boy gravely assures master that nothing else can be got. "Bazar-man got nothing else, got no nothing"—which assertion admits of no further dispute. Passing the bazar next day your attention is caught by the sight of a fine large pumpkin displayed to view in its front verandah. Rashly and without consideration, without asking the price, you hail the bazar-man, who is sitting behind the pumpkin, not on his hind legs, but on his cross legs, which is just something of the same sort of curious position, only apparently much more uncomfortable, notwithstanding which he is most comfortable, so comfortable as not to take any more of notice of your hail, otherwise than to give you a fixed stare and put some green betel leaf into his mouth. Thinking he does not hear you, you repeat the hail in louder and harsher tones of voice, upon which he turns partially round and spits into a curious-looking brass box, standing close by his side, and again resumes a fixed stone-like gaze. Very likely he considers you

"VERY FINE PUMPKIN,"

are not a customer, not likely you are coming to drive a hard bargain about the price of any or sundry articles spread out in the front of him. You are very likely only wanting to ask him some question as to coolies selling rice, or changing rice at his bazar for an equivalent in something else. He is not going to take any notice or trouble at all about such excessively impertinent curiosity in your part. But what a change suddenly comes over the whole of his indifferent dreamy deportment when you shout, "What is the price of that pumpkin?" He is all alive now, in fact he actually suddenly jumps up: an act which your simple question by no means called for. He lays hold of the pumpkin, turns it over, and tells you, what you don't need to be told, what you are very well aware of: "Very fine pumpkin, sir." Thinking he may possibly have not understood you. The question is repeated, and the prompt reply "No more pumpkins in any of the other bazars." You admit the fact, know it perfectly well, but—what is the price of it? The reply again is: "Roads very bad, plenty of rain: no coolies to carry anything." You lose patience, and move on. Before you have moved far, a voice reaches you, "Master can have for two rupees." You stop if you are not very far gone, perhaps return, and offer him a shilling. He scouts the very idea—no, no, he will cut into slices, and sell it to the coolies at a few coppers per slice, and make far more than the two rupees; it was only because master was master that he would sell it to him at such, to himself, a losing rate. If you feel inclined to carry on the game, you may probably eventually get the article for sixpence or a shilling; if not you move off, and the bazar-man lapses into a statue until the next customer turns up or makes an inquiry. But the memory of the pumpkin haunts you, and the subject is mentioned to the boy who says he can manage the bazar-man, not only can, but will. So the boy girds up his loins, adjusts his turban, and takes his departure for the bazar, where he remains *all day*, and towards evening makes his appearance in the verandah of the bungalow, and triumphantly lays down at the foot of one of the posts one-half of the pumpkin. "Ah," thinks the master, "half a loaf is better than no bread, but, but, what have you paid for it?" "Cheap, very cheap," is the answer, "just one-half what master was asked, just one rupee." "Well," says master, "but as you have only got the half for half the price of the whole, can't you see that you have not procured it any cheaper, that it is just the same price as was demanded from myself?" "No, no," says the boy, "master say two rupees, now only one." "Well" replies

PUMPKIN CURRY.

master, "only one paid, and only half received." But the boy adjusts his turban, and looks very gravely at the pumpkin, as if there was something very peculiar about that vegetable which was altogether incomprehensible. Now the boy was very probably not such a fool as he pretended to be, indeed it was more than probable he had received, or would receive, in some small way, commission from the bazarman, for making purchases at his shop, at his own prices, which commission would probably be a small reduction or discount on the price charged master, paid into the palm of the boy, in ready cash, perhaps only a few coppers, but still it was a perquisite, however small, and boys were, and we suppose still are, fond of perquisites, on the principle that "many a little makes a mickle." But the pumpkin was purchased, the cash paid, and what was the use of making any further disturbance about it? So, as to-morrow was Sunday, master thinks he will have a better dinner than usual, and perhaps ask a neighbour to step in. To-morrow duly turns up, and a conversation takes place in the verandah about what was to be for dinner. The boy as usual says, "Salt-fish curry, and pumpkin cut into pieces, boiled, and served up like potatoes." "No salt-fish curry!" says master, "make pumpkin," so after a good deal of talking, and mutual arrangement, it was all agreed and settled, that the swell Sunday dinner was to consist of pumpkin curry, and a piece of roasted salt fish. None of our readers need laugh, for, if properly cooked, a very fine dinner it is, and we used to eat it thus: a spoon in the right hand for the rice and curry, and in the left was held the roasted or toasted salt-fish; a spoonful of curry, rice and curry, and a bite off the toasted salt-fish, alternately, was the Sunday's dinner, and a very fine dinner too. It can't be got in the old country. Very fine rice can be got, but they can't make really good curry, for the very simple and easily understood reason, that they have not got the fresh and green materials to make it with, for your curry powder in bottles does not, and cannot, make up for this want. It is the dry material, and has by no means the fresh flavour which the green curry stuff possesses, and another want in the bottled curry powder is coconut. We all know how wanting in flavour a curry is, when we have no coconuts, and, in our own opinion, no substitute yet tried has been in the least successful in taking the place of the coconut.

We never approved of the mode some boys had of making pumpkin curry, which was the pumpkin cut into small square pieces, and served up in the curry water. Our orders always were, and taste was, and still

"BOMBAY DUCK."

is, to have the pumpkin well mashed up, and served in the dish, thick, perhaps of about the consistency of thin porridge, in fact what the Americans would call "pumpkin squash," and if you have to eat along the some well prepared "sambal," a piece of toasted fish, as already described, or a Bombay duck, you have a dinner you can't get in the old country.*

But talking about Bombay ducks puts us in mind of a funny thing which happened to Mr. Green, long ago. Mr. Green usually visited his periya durai's, on a Sunday morning, and spent the day at his bungalow, where of course he enjoyed the good fare, which was the peculiar speciality of periya durais in these times, and the periya durai knowing that Mr. Green was rather hard-up for food during the week, would be particularly attentive to him on his visits. "Mr. Green," says he one Sunday morning, "what would you like for breakfast to-day? There is beef, mutton, tinned meats. I suppose you don't care about rice and curry." "No, no," says Mr. Green, "never mind." "And there is Bombay duck." Mr. Green had never heard these two words before as applied to anything to eat; his mouth began to water, visions of roasted duck floated before his mind's eye. He said he would take the Bombay duck. "What, says his P. D. "a hungry fellow like you to breakfast on Bombay duck. Nonsense, you are not ill, are you?" Mr. Green replied that, so far from being ill, he was very well, and particularly hungry, and thought he could make a duck look foolish. The P. D. now began to "twig," and resolved to carry on the joke. So he asked if one Bombay duck would be enough. "Quite enough," says Mr. Green, "more than enough, and no need for anything else: no rice and curry." Mr. Green's breakfast, in exact accordance with his wishes, was served up, the cover was removed, and disclosed a very small fish, or rather piece of a fish! about as long as one's forefinger, only very thin. It was toasted crisp, and the whole was not a good mouthful, and certainly hardly two small ones, and this was Mr. Green's breakfast, on his own choice; nothing more. His P. D. had a good laugh, and gave him a piece of advice, "Don't rashly accept anything, which you don't understand, and which may perhaps with intent convey a double meaning, so that you can't lay hold or claim on the giver or seller." After this, a good breakfast was made, on various good

* We once ate part of a pumpkin which had been allowed to ripen to the colour of the tiles on which it rested, and the flavour of that pumpkin was what the Yankees would call "some pumpkins."—ED.

MALDIVE FISH.

things, but Mr. Green, long afterwards, in after life frequently told the story, and said he would remember, that breakfast as long as he lived, for it had done him more good than all the breakfasts he had ever previously eaten, and he never forgot the lesson received from the Bombay duck.*

Now, although we have eaten thousands of Bombay ducks, we have never yet known why this fish is called so. What is the origin of the term? Why should a dried fish be called a duck? and why should it be called a Bombay one? Is the fish caught, dried, or cured, specially or only at, or off Bombay, just in the same way as Maldive fish derive their name (we suppose) from being caught and cured off, or in the proximity of the Maldive islands.† These Maldive fish are another necessary ingredient for curry. On looking at or handling them, who would ever suppose they were fish, as they look like a small piece of hard wood, about four or five inches long, but a capital zest they give to the curry and the method of using them is to scrape them down on a rough tin grater, reduced to a rough powder, and then mixed up with the other curry-stuffs. The Maldive fish, scraped down, is also the chief ingredient in some sorts of "sambals," and in case some may ask what is a sambal, it is just another sort of relish, eaten with rice, or, for that part, with rice and curry, in fact it is just a species of curry. There are dry sambals and wet ones: the former are made of dry scraping of all sorts of condiments, dry chillies, pepper, scrapings of Maldive fish, and what not, placed on the table on a plate; it is a dry powder, so you just take up as much of it as is wanted in a teaspoon and dust it over your rice or rice and curry. The wet sambals are different varieties, but all contain something of the same ingredients; all hot to taste; as much as you want of it is placed on the side of the plate containing the rice and curry, and as much of it taken at every spoonful or occasional spoonful of rice to suit the taste of the eater. In fact sambals, Bombay ducks, chutney, and all the little odds and ends eaten to curry, can be explained, that they are just "the sauce," just answer something

* There is a stock story of a new arrival sending a cart to bring from the bazar a dozen of Bombay ducks.—ED.

† Any one who has visited Bombay will see the little fish after which dwellers in the western city are called "ducks" being caught in the estuaries and dried in the sun. A considerable amounts of salt-fish is introduced into Ceylon from the Maldives.—ED.

PORRIDGE AND MILK.

of the same end and purpose in giving your rice and curry a relish, as Worcester, Harvey, or any of the numerous other sauces give a relish and flavour to the old country dishes. We suspect if the old country dishes could be had in the planting districts, the sauces would be held in light esteem, farewell to sambals. Bombay ducks, &c., yet, we don't know it might do at first, the first novelty exchange. But depend upon it curry and rice or rice and curry is the planters' dish. It is suitable for the climate and custom, and the servants know how to make it. We have known some who abolished rice and curry altogether, but it would not be put down, it would crop up. Some hot day, the beef would arrive, tainted and unfit for food. The mutton would be or consist more of sinews and skin than flesh. Neither could be partaken of, and being dismissed from the table, there was no rice and curry. You were hungry and had nothing to eat; you now come to the conclusion, that it had been a rash act, discarding that old stand-by, and some faint ideas of what had and has been said of never cutting an old friend or an old pulper, because you have no immediate or apparent use for them, rise up in reproachful memory in your mind; you put your hands in your pockets, stretch out your legs to their full length below the table, and call out "Boy!"—to which he speedily responds in the usual way, and that is by your requiring to shout out in a very much louder tone, not once, but two or three times, until he responds in the way you desire and require. "Boy. Now you understand, always after this make rice and curry, whatever there is for dinner, always have it in case it may be wanted. And, in case it is not used, why you can just eat it yourself." This order seems to be full comprehended, for the reply is, "Very good sir, always make, always have curry and——" "Come now," say you, "Come now, recollect, always have rice and curry."

But in case some of our readers may still desire to dispute the point, some other somewhat similar applications on articles of diet will now be given. Take "porridge and milk," Porridge is the chief food, and milk merely an accompaniment to make it go down just exactly in the same point of view as curry is to the rice, therefore we say porridge and milk. Now we would just appeal to any of our old Scotch planters, if, in their early days in the old country, they ever heard this staple article of diet called "milk and porridge." Would not "Jenny," with her bare red arms and short gown, look somewhat stupid and confused if you gave the order to make milk and porridge to breakfast? She would stare at you, and likely say,

CURDS AND CREAM.

"What's your wish sir?" You would repeat the order, she would slowly retire, and after a time probably bring in the porridge boiled in milk instead of water. But say "porridge and milk" and there is never any doubt about that. "Bread and butter": you must acknowledge butter is to the bread just precisely in a similar point of view what curry is to the rice, and yet whoever hears of any one with any pretension to any education at all talking of "butter and bread": in fact this latter expression is only in use enough the most illiterate and vulgar of our population, if it is now in use at all. "Strawberries and cream": another expression explained in the same way as "porridge and milk." None ever heard one talk of "cream and strawberries." "Curds and cream," just on the same reasoning. You would not say "cream and curds." And so on: we might write to any extent in proof of the argument, that is to say if any one now will argue the point. Let him argue away, he merely argues for the sake of argument and downright obstinacy. Go your way, curry and rice, and I will pursue mine, rice and curry. We will never forget you, and thus will add you as a fourth to the three things which we have already declared a man never forgets. He may—he might (for it is wonderful how hardened and unfeeling some do become) forget his first sweetheart, his first pound note, and his first servant, but without food, all these, however you may prize them when you have food, are only secondary considerations when you are starving; and thus it happens that he never can and never will forget his first rice and curry cooked by "Periya Karuppen."

The shadows and shades of many a long bygone year are lengthening in the distance; our rising and struggling sun, obscured in thick darkness and mist, was then sustained and supported by rice and curry, and, thus supported, many a storm has been come through, many a rough gale weathered. It was then served up in a blue willow pattern rice dish, and the boiled rice was seen projecting through. The dish containing the curry was cracked and its cover completely broken, gone, so that, for a cover, an inverted soup plate had to be supplied. These two dishes were placed on a very dirty Batticaloa tablecloth—so dirty, so very dirty, that we had frequently to order it away and eat out rice and curry off the bare boards. As our sun struggled up from and out of darkness, mist and obscurity, all this passed away, and in the heyday of middle life, the noon, when the sun was at its meridian, we still ate rice and curry served up in beautiful white dishes with gold edging, placed on the whitest and cleanest of tablecloths. It was the best

INDIAN NABOBS.

and best cooked that could possibly be, but somehow or other—how could it be?—we neither relished or enjoyed it so much as that abominable stuff cooked by “Periya Karuppen” in the morning of life. It is now getting well on in the afternoon, the sun descends and the shadows lengthen, faster and faster our sun descends, longer and longer lengthen the shadows, it draws towards evening, and how fast it comes on. My friends who are yet in your forenoon, you think the time long; weary and toilsome is the way; will it never be noon? “Shall we never be a P. D.?” If your time is long, work, work with all your might, for the afternoon will come, and if you have not worked in the forenoon, you will be less able to do so in the afternoon. Besides, how often have you heard the old saying, heard! why experienced it over and over again—“that an hour’s work in the morning or forenoon is worth any time in the afternoon.” But what is the use of working in the afternoon: in the late afternoon? Use your forenoon well with wisdom and discretion, always keeping in view that the afternoon is coming, and that during the forenoon you must lay up some store for the evening of your days. No rest in the afternoon: what more natural? Why should you waste or squander in your forenoon on folly or worse than folly what you most assuredly will want or feel the want of in your afternoon when obliged to work, perhaps, work hard? In the afternoon, you may have many a self-reproach. “If I had only been careful in the forenoon, this would not have been, but it is too late now.” Yes, it is too late; and bear this well in the mind, stamp it on your hearts, “Nothing is too late in the forenoon of life, but most things are in the afternoon, if deferred till then.”

It is well on in the afternoon of our life, and we still eat and enjoy rice and curry: in fact, often eat it when we could not relish anything else. So here is a case of the force of old habits and customs, upon which subject some remarks have been made, in a previous chapter. Now, is it not strange, this sudden lapse into somewhat melancholy sentiments? What have the opening words of the chapter got to do with all this? Let us endeavour to trace the matter to its source. In times long gone past, many of us have seen, or at all events heard of, the now extinct species of “Indian nabobs.” We quite recollect them, people very irritable self-willed, and difficult to deal with; they were always right, never wrong, and would have everything their own way, and if that was crossed in anything, however trifling, the result would be no trifle, no trifling! These nabobs had one special char-

YELLOW NABOBS.

ctæristic, and that was, they were very yellow in the skin, their faces had exactly the colour of saffron. Now, this shade of colour is not considered a mark of beauty in the old country, although some of the very charming Tamil ladies endeavour to add to their charms, just as if that was possible ! for we never can pass by a lady—absent or present, black or white, or or even saffron colour—without paying a compliment, whether it is deserved or not.

Well, it has sometimes been the subject of many a discussion, as to how these nabobs acquired this yellow appearance, for one could never for a moment suppose they cared one straw about what the colour of their faces was, so long as the lining of their pockets was all right. Could it be that the “yellow boys” in their pockets so permeated with delight the whole system, as to communicate a portion of their yellowness to the skin : so much so, that you could tell by the colour of the man’s face that his pockets were filled with guineas—we talked of guineas then, not sovereigns. No, it was not this : this had nothing at all to do with the question. The simple fact was that these nabobs, like the Ceylon planter of the olden times, lived a good deal upon rice and curry ; the curry, as we all know, contained a good deal of saffron, or at all events was of that colour, and had so diffused itself through his whole system as to render the appearance of the skin somewhat of the same colour. Now, if this popular opinion of nabobs was true, we may apply a similar rule or idea to the coffee planter. Personally, having lived so long on curry and rice, it may be some particles of the former still lurk about the corners of the stomach, affect the heart, or even the brain, or, at all events, that these three very important organs of the human frame, being somewhat stained and tinged with curry, like the nabob’s skin, the stomach affects the heart, the heart the brain which having no other vent, vents it all out in chapter the thirty-first, until the reader may exclaim : “Hold, enough, no more curry and rice—give us a Bombay duck !” But we are not done yet, and will now proceed to give some information as to what we made curry of when very hard pressed in these times. Curry has this special recommendation, that you can make it of anything, always with the very necessary reservation—provided you have got it. That was the question then, not the quality or making of it : small store we set upon that ; if we only had the material, we would manage the cooking such as it was, although, no doubt, it would not be called cooking now.

Over all new clearings, after the rain set in, a spe-

"PADDOCKS' STOOLS."

cies of fungus used to spring up, somewhat similar to a mushroom, but they were not mushrooms, they were more of the character of what is called in Scotland, and what our Scotch friends will quite understand, *paddocks' stools*. These the boy used to gather, bring them into the cooking-house, and, after selecting and washing, make curry of them. If they were soft, fresh and new, the curry was not at all unpalatable, and made the boiled rice go down very well. Up to the present day, coolies still search after this commodity, and we have never heard of it doing them any injury. This was bad enough, but what do you think we sometimes ate when there were no *paddocks' stools*? Look about the clearing, after a spell of wet weather, and you will see attached to the line of trees in stages of decay, somewhat like a limpet on a rock, a species of mushroom-like growth, only without a stalk, adhering firmly to the logs; this was picked off, brought to the kitchen, steeped in hot water to soften it, cut into small strips, and boiled into curry. All the boiling however would not make it soft enough to masticate, so that these strips of cooked fungus, or rather timber excrescences, were just bolted and swallowed, along with the rice. We suppose this sort of thing is unknown now however, but you may recollect them. In the swamps, a luxuriant plant used to grow, with a long succulent stalk about the thickness of the finger. These stalks were collected, brought to the bungalow, peeled, cleaned and made into curry. A sort of wild yam used to grow about the uncleared corners and edges of the jungle in stalk and leaf; it was just the same as the cultivated yam, but it had no root. The leaves of this plant were collected, boiled into the consistency of spinach, and made into curry. We always rather avoided this curry, as it had a very bitter taste, unpleasantly bitter. Perhaps we were wrong, and, had we eaten heartily of it, it might have proved an excellent tonic! But the great stand-by was what the coolies still use to this day and what no doubt you have frequent rows with them for not pulling up in the weeding, *kirai*." *Kira s* were of various sorts, but the chief was a fast-growing plant with plenty of stalks and leaves, and which, when come to maturity, produced a small berry when ripe quite black and about the size of a black currant. The cooly would, after work, proceed through the clearing, hunting after this *kirai* and would carefully pick all the leaves off it, leaving stalks untouched, in order to produce a fresh crop at some future time. Now we were sometimes reduced to such extremities, in order to procure something for curry, as to be guilty of assault and

robbery, and it happened in this way. Walking up and down the verandah, in a very disconsolate state, having just been told by the boy that there was nothing for curry, and having just made up our mind to dine upon boiled rice, thankful even to have that, and if the carts had not turned up that very forenoon, we would have had no dinner at all, a cooly crosses the end of the verandah; his cloth round his waist is well bulged out, and evidently contains something. We give a searching glance, and see a quantity of small green leaves sticking out. Here is a chance, no time to be lost; we rush out of the verandah, collar the cooly, give him a good shake, as an idle scoundrel, who had not been at work that day. What right has he to go idling about the clearing gathering *kirai* and the estate so short-handed? We will teach him a lesson. Out with that *kirai*, quick, instant, *suruka*; we won't even wink at gathering *kirai*, unless you have been at work," and the cooly confesses he had not. We proceed forcibly—no, the cooly was quite passive—to possess ourselves of a portion of the *kirai*, and then tell him we won't be too hard on him. We have repented, we can go, which he does, and in a short time gathers up more. We now call the boy, and point to the proceeds of the robbery, which he takes into the cook-house, and prepares for curry. The leaves of this vegetable are not at all bad, but, being soft, it requires a great deal of it to make a curry in any quantity. It may be asked why frighten the cooly out of a handful of *kirai*; surely, had he been asked, or had he only known the master wanted it, he would have very cheerfully given up the whole, and gone off, and soon picked another supply for himself. Most certainly he would, only too glad to oblige the master, but, do you recollect what was written some time ago, about "What will folk say?" In this instance we acknowledge having bowed before this scarecrow. For what would they say in the lines, if told, as they were sure to be, for everything is told and talked of in the lines, that master had no curry, nothing to eat, and had asked him for his dinner! Fancy that! Fancy a cooly giving up his dinner for and at the request of his master! We could not stand that humiliation, anything was better than that. We thought then, and think still, that assault and robbery, under all circumstances of the case, were excusable, and that if the cooly had summoned us to court the case would have been dismissed, as having been committed in self-defence, under danger of starvation!

Another species of the curry tribe is *muligatawny*

MULLIGATAWNY.

soup; this we suspect from its name, is a dish peculiar to, or originating in the Madras presidency, as all, who know anything of the Tamil language will at once admit, the name is composed of two words in that language, *milugu* (pepper) and *tannir* (water) pepper-water, pepper-water soup. The soup is a good deal in use in the old country, but those who make and use it have not the least idea of the meaning of its name. Like rice and curry, and for much the same reason, this soup is only to be got in perfection in its native country or in eastern climes, and in carrying out our idea that it is specially a dish of the Madras presidency, we have always found Tamil servants from thence, cooked it best, cooked it as it ought to be done. We quite recollect this dish was wont to be used as a sort of substitute for curry, and, as such, was eaten in very large quantity. When the rice and muligatawny soup were placed on the table, the boy, on lifting off the covers, would give timely warning, "No curry got." Having received this information, and having very grave doubts that anything else "got" was a very unnecessary or superfluous question, we would fill up the plate about half full of rice and then a few ladles of the soup over it and eat away, and, when the first plateful was done, have another, and perhaps a third, but we don't think a fourth was ever attempted, perhaps from the very simple reason, not that a fourth one could not have been taken, but that the soup and rice were all done. This soup was never in such general use as curry, because unlike curry it cannot be made out of anything or everything: it requires, or rather is all the better of having some strength and flavour of meat of some sort in it. Our own idea is, that, to have this dish in perfection, it should be made of chicken, chicken muligatawny and rice properly cooked by a Madrassee will make one forget curry and rice. So long as we can get that soup we will manage without the curry—only for a change, however, for we could not live always on it as was done with the curry the fact being, that, make the soup of what you like, the supply of commodities fit for making soup, as it ought to be made is but limited, as compared with the resources you have to fall back upon in making varieties of curry. So that, although you have rice and curry every day, still every day you have a change of curry, and although it is the same dish, still it is of different material, differently cooked, still rice and curry, but a different curry. Having been dining at a ceremonious party, not long ago, we observed among the number of dishes always handed round our old acquaintances,

PLANTAIN-LEAF DISHES.

rice and curry. We kept a sharp eye on them, watched them; those who partook of it helped themselves very daintily to about half a table-spoonful of rice, and on this, they would just place a small speck of curry taken out of the curry dish on the tip of the spoon—for you must know, our old dish is introduced here at grand dinners, merely as a sort of supernumery, a something to play with, between courses. The sight of the dish did, as it always does, bring memories of the “light of other days,” of the huge platefuls hungry planters used to stow away: and then cry out: “Boy, more rice.” We smiled! we know it was rude a breach of all good manners, but it could not be helped; the smile would out. Our opposite guests looked very hard, and we felt bound to apologize and explain what we were smiling at, in case it might be supposed it was any of the company, and we would again be stigmatized as only a coffee planter, a man who has lived all his days amongst black people you know, and therefore knows nothing. how can he? We explained, it amused us when we thought of how curry and rice was eaten in Ceylon. Of course, they were all down upon us for an explanation, they wanted to have a laugh, to smile also. So they were told all about it: how coolies heaped up boiled rice on the leaf of the plantain tree, and ate as much, and indeed more as would fill that soup-tureen: in fact, that a whole tureen full of boiled rice would be rather a poor dinner for a cooly: he would eat more if he could get it; that they always calculated the state of their health by the amount of boiled rice they were able to gorge themselves with, that, when he says he has not eaten any rice, or eaten but poorly, he means and quite understands that his master understands he is ill. But if you see him swollen up like a drum, swollen to such an extent that, if rather raw, you may begin to be alarmed as to his health, question him as to his health, a bright beam of satisfaction will lighten up his soapy visage. he will say he is well, never was better—all owing to that very fine rice, very good boiled rice. Even the little children of six years old, less or more are also allowed to stuff themselves in this same way, so that a child after a good feed of boiled rice just looks exactly like a small barrel or cask with a head on the top and two feet sticking out at the bottom! “What frightful savages!” was the general exclamation. “But surely you planters do not act in this way? What do they live on?” We reply that whatever they do live on *now* they live very well and comfortably, but that it was not always so: that in the olden times, as also in the middle ages, they

FOOD AND CLIMATE.

also lived upon rice. "And how much did they eat?" "Oh! they did not consume so much as the coolies, perhaps only two soup-platefuls of curry and boiled rice, one after the other, with three or four tablespoonfuls of curry to each plate. And if they were particularly hungry after a hard day's work, they might help themselves to a third plate, provided there was any left." There was now a general expression of astonishment. and some exclaimed, "What a barbarous set of people they must have been, and do you mean to say you have done this also?" "To be sure, frequently, sometimes three plates of rice and curry." There was now a general turning in the chairs and a good deal of coughing, and nobody spoke a word: it was quite evident they did not believe it. At last one managed to clear his throat and say, "No wonder you planters come home and spend all your hard-earned gains in doctor's fees and prescriptions, and at chemists' shops! Don't talk about climate, hard work, and hot sun. What made you eat so much rice?" It was in vain to protest and explain that any amount of rice a man could eat would never hurt him. "Don't tell us that," was the answer. "Don't we use rice for pudding, and how can or could any one keep their health if they lived upon pudding; ate two soup-platefuls of pudding to breakfast and three to dinner? It is our opinion it is all owing to you Indian people and that curry and rice that there are now so many doctors, and they are all making their fortunes." Just so, stay-at-home people, who have never travelled, get contracted in their ideas, they cannot understand anything that does not come under their own experience.

They did not think or forgot altogether that, just at the very times of which we write, the bulk of the country people here lived upon oatmeal porridge and ate it just in about the same proportions and to the same extent as the country people in Ceylon did rice and curry. Both respectively were suitable for the people and climate. And no more could the planters (some have tried it) live upon porridge than the people in the old country could upon rice. Times have changed and still are changing. People at home, even the working classes, seldom eat oatmeal in any shape, and porridge is now like curry and rice, a dish of the past; it has not even the same advantage in still being retained as a stand-by; it is dismissed, as also all other oatmeal commodities, bannocks and cakes, as vulgar, not fit even for servants. Servants! they are more particular than any; they will make an express

DIET AND LUXURY.

agreement when engaged that there is to be no oatmeal of any sort supplied, as part or portion of their food; they go in for hot rolls, loaf bread and tea. Coffee is in no favour, tea is the cry. This is bad enough for house servants, but what shall we say of the working man at eight to ten hours' work a day, having his tea and loaf of bread for morning breakfast, and tea, toast and butter for evening meal, and very likely a dinner and supper of butcher's meat, and it is the same with working people everywhere, more pay, and better food. We do not suppose it is so with the cooly, although he is at all times ready for a catch at more pay; you won't catch him nodding on this point! We suspect he lives, as far as regards food, very much the same now as he did before; successive generations have made little change in this. It is rice and curry now, as it was a thousand years ago. We cannot say anything of any certainty about the thousand, having had no personal experience so far back as that!

But, be it oatmeal porridge, or be it rice and curry, we say, and say decidedly, that it is not a good sign for any country, or of the customs of its inhabitants, when they utterly discard the food and dishes upon which their predecessors for many generations lived, preserved their health, strength, and generally flourished. It is a sign of the creeping in of luxury, for you will always find the old-fashioned now forsaken dishes were simple, plain, homely fare, but very wholesome and nourishing.

We do not at all mean to say, that Ceylon coffee planters should live upon rice and curry, or that Scotchmen at home should live upon porridge and oatmeal cakes and bannocks. But we assert, that both of these articles should enter into the usual diet of the respective countries, and not be utterly put aside, as they now, indeed, most frequently are. It was a grave error in the old planter's life, but it was an unavoidable one, proceeding from necessity, his living entirely upon rice and curry, and it may be, we do not say it is, only may be, an error in some planters of the present day, that they never eat rice and curry at all. We have often been told by medical gentlemen in the old country, who surely ought to know, that is not good for one, especially in a warm climate like Ceylon, to live so much on butcher's meat, as some, and the writer himself, used to do. There used to be a great deal too much meat eaten, always at breakfast and dinner, and frequently at tiffin, whereas, in our old home climate, the rule is, only once a day at dinner. No doubt the habits

THE DINNER-HOUR.

of the planter are different from those in general use at home, for the bulk of his work, sometimes the half of it, and the best half too, is done before breakfast, we may almost say his morning coffee and toast is his breakfast, and his nominal breakfast at 10 or 11 o'clock his dinner; for noon, with all workmen, in all countries, is the natural and usual time to dine, call it by any name you like. If this view be carried out, the planter's dinner at seven just corresponds with the old-fashioned supper of the old country, which is now giving place to the meal called "*tea*," a real Scotch tea which will make the mouths of some of our old friends water: tea, oatmeal cakes and bannocks, and fresh or salt butter, as you will, flour scones, white as snow, with a patch of brown over the surface here and there just sufficient to show they are properly fired, side dishes of marmalade, jams, jellies, take your choice, or pitch into the whole lot, which is better, down with one, another come on, and as if this was not enough there stand fine thick cakes of shortbread, all stuck over with "sweeties." Have you forgotten what sweeties are? Think a little, and try and remember, when you were a boy, what was contained in that small parcel, wrapped up in red paper, which, when your old uncle or aunt came to visit "Pa and Ma," they slipped into your hand, trembling with delight. No, you have not forgotten the "poke of sweeties."

But, call it by any name you will, dinner or supper, as a rule after this meal (unless in crop time) the planter's day's work is done, and he is not long of going to bed. We always personally dined at seven, that was the dinner hour, and generally in bed and asleep at or before nine o'clock; it was not a very good system, but nothing else could be done; others have tried an earlier dinner hour, but there were constant interruptions, as long as it was light. Coolies, kanganies, cartmen, and every sort of pest, would hang about the verandah with some complaint to make, some great grievance requiring immediate redress or adjustment, so great, that you would frequently have to get up and adjust it, but what you thought could easily be settled in a couple of seconds was found altogether a mistake. When you commence to talk to a black man—especially if he happens to be a Malabar cooly, or a Sinhalese cartman—it is like the letting out of water, you don't know where, or how, or when, it will end; seconds lapse into minutes, and an hour is composed of minutes, and probably, after half an hour's talking, you would get out of some difficulty by telling your untimely visitor you must resume your dinner, and come

CANDLES AND LAMPS.

back to-morrow, and you now find dinner cold and spoilt. This is bad enough, but you have not had the satisfaction of settling anything definite with your visitor, for have you not told him to "come back to-morrow," and no doubt he will come, and just a dinner is served. But they are to be excused; we know very well complaints must be attended to, and the work-people have no other time to come: they are at work during the day; and the evening, after dark, is not suitable; it therefore only remains with them to come at our early dinner hour, and torment the man who dines early.

But supposing you ever have peace to eat your dinner, if they arrive in the verandah while you are at it, they will be polite enough to retire for the time. Unless under very great pressure, a cooly will never disturb "master" when he is eating, for he considers this a very great and important event of the day, not a, but the, event; he judges from his own personal feelings and experiences when master says at the working place "Where is Muttuswami?" a finger is pointed to a big stone at the edge of the stream, which is a sufficient answer to its question, for there is Muttuswami, rolling up boiled rice into balls, and cramming it into his mouth. A fine heap of rice it is, all spread out on the green leaf off one of your young plantain trees, which you have given positive orders to the boy to watch, and allow none to cut off a single leaf. You eye Muttuswami sternly, but what cares he? You know perfectly well he knows you won't interfere with or annoy him in any way, so long as he is eating rice. And thus it was in his own case, they would, seeing master at dinner, retire, only for a time, but they would not go far. After your dinner was done, at the sight of the boy taking away the dishes, or of your going out into the verandah to smoke, they would be at you. It was perfectly intolerable, just as dinner was finished, when one feels inclined for and requires a little rest and peace, to be bothered in this way. You give it up, and resort to the old hour, seven o'clock, with lighted candles. Coolies never trouble or visit you after candles are lighted, unless it is something of more than usual importance, and thus it was, that after a tedious tiresome hour, or more, at the pay table—paying was just done in time, for it was quite dusk, but still a number of fellows were hanging about the verandah; they did not say anything, but there they stood, all looking at you, as if they, instead of having been paid their wages, had suffered some cruel wrong from your hands, and were gazing on you with eyes filled with speaking reproach. You call out in a loud voice,

“DINNER READY, SAR.”

“Boy, bring candles, and dinner,” and, as the candles appear, the coolies whose pay was all short, and who had not been a single day absent, disappear, and you are alone and at peace. But candles! whatever made us make such a mistake as this, for whoever heard of or saw candles, thirty years ago! It was a lamp, and a very original one too—a tumbler half filled with water, oil on the top, and a floating wick, but, as the progress of civilization and luxury advanced, the tumbler began to give way. When purchasing some stores at Venn, Preston & Co.’s, in Kandy, we were induced to invest in a pair of lamp burners, and stands, grand stands they were, for these times, in fact, we were often in fear of our periya burai coming in, after they were lit, and that he would accuse us of extravagance, and living in such a style as was not warranted on a salary of £4 3s. 4d. per month. The stands were made of wood, slightly turned at the bottom, and painted a bright red, and well do we recollect even yet, how grand we thought our homely table looked, after having discarded the tumbler lamp, and brought in the lamp burner, on the red stand; but our pride was soon to have a fall, and as is generally the case, resulting from a fall, either of oneself, or something, or somebody else. The wooden lamp stands, as all old planters know, and for that part of it young ones too, that is to say if they are still in use, are very light, and the burner on the top, filled with water, and oil floating on its top, make them what can be termed “top-heavy,” so that any unusually strong knock against the table, coming into contact with a dish, on laying or removing dinner, is very apt to upset it. Now how often do we see it happen, when people go in for luxuries, which are beyond their means and station, it often results in anything but a happy result. At that time, we had no right to go in for the luxury of wooden lamp stands, painted red; the act recoiled on the actor and was its own punishment. Punctually at seven o’clock “Dinner ready, sar,” was the announcement; and there were the two curry dishes, standing on the dirty tablecloth, with, as usual, one at the top, or covers broken, which loss, as before stated, was always supplied by an inverted soup plate, if you had a soup plate, which just as frequently as not, indeed more frequently, you had not; then, in this case, a plate on the cover of your broken soup tureen, which, in a moment of extravagant folly, Venn & Co. had persuaded you to buy, answered the purpose. The boy very smart would bustle round the table, and in a wink, as they say, off would go the covers off the curry dishes, in performing which action the boy would knock against the corner of the table, the red

NO MORE CURRY!

lamps would sway, totter, and smash, but as a matter of course right into the curry dish, and all was dark. A light having been thrown over subject, it was found the burners were not broken, but that the curry was destroyed with being all mixed up with coconut oil. Never mind, it might have been worse, it might have been the rice. We can dine upon rice, without curry, but not upon curry without rice. We say "Boy; more curry," but he says there is none. Having some doubts on this subject, a sudden inroad is made into the kitchen, and we see in a corner a black earthen chatty like a large saucepan covered by another inverted chatty or dish. The upper one is removed and reveals to the admiring gaze a very large quantity of very fine curry, much finer than that which was destroyed by the lamp burner. The boy does not seem put out in any way; he merely says he did not know there was any, it must have been the kitchen cooly's dinner. We reply, if that is the case, he must punish the kitchen cooly, as he has often been told not to cook in the kitchen. Where is that dog? "Come along old Growler. Here's some dinner for you," and the curry, the boy's dinner, is poured over the remainder of the rice and speedily eaten by the dog, and we solemnly tell that boy that, if he had told the truth, we would have eaten as little curry as possible, and the dog should have got none. So he has just lost his own dinner by telling a lie. But the lesson is quite lost, lying just comes as natural to boys as truth to the master.

In a tropical climate, one requires at times a stimulant. It is now generally pronounced by medical men, to be an old-fashioned error, that wine, beer, and spirits, are necessary to preserve the health of Europeans in the tropics. As a rule quite the contrary opinion is now held, and, so far from being necessary, they are not only unnecessary but in many cases positively hurtful, especially the habit of taking a glass of sherry before dinner, to give one an appetite. Now curry possesses the qualities of a harmless stimulant, it stimulates the stomach, and does not, as liquors do, injuriously affect the nervous system and the brain. If you come in done up with a hard day's work, and feel indifferent about dinner, don't think you can eat anything, just try a good hot dish of curry and rice, and you will manage to stow away a good lot of it, even without the aid of sherry and bitters, in fact after the first few spoonfuls that glass of sherry will be quite tasteless, and almost scald your mouth. Having enlarged to such an extent upon curry, we have no room left for even a few brief remarks upon rice which were intended to have been made, having far exceeded the usual limits of the space

PATCHED UP.

most kindly reserved by our excellent friend "The Editor." Reader or readers, are you at dinner, and talking over the merits or demerits of "curry and rice," and whether it should be called so, or "rice and curry?" Pass the sherry, fill up a toast, drink it in solemn silence to the memory of our brethren who are gone. There are few left of thirty years ago now you can count them on your fingers. Fill up another with three cheers for those that are left, and if you like, only if you like, before rising, you can just say "Here's a luck to

P. D. MILLIE."

CHAPTER XXXII.

PATCHED UP.

In these times, nobody required any patching up : all were young, strong healthy fellows, who, in fact, presumed too much upon their health and strength ; that is to say, if we ever gave the subject a thought at all, which is very doubtful, we overtaxed and overstretched our health and strength in many ways, when it was by no means necessary to do so, either on our own account, or for our employers. But it must be admitted, few overtaxed their mental or bodily powers, especially the latter, unless it might be, as very frequently was, remaining rather longer in Kandy than was either necessary or expedient. After having transacted the estate business it might be judged more than expedient, absolutely necessary, to make a push homeward and overtax our strength in riding out to the estate, thirty or forty miles off, during the night, especially if it was moonlight, and many of those roads travelled during the clear light of a tropical full moon presented to the eye ever-changing views of scenery if not the most amongst the most, magnificent in the world. But the worst of those long moonlight rides was, that the next day we were unfit for work : arriving on the estate about or after midnight, after a long ride, it could not be expected we were to turn out at half-past five next morning, and muster the coolies ; the want of sleep during the night was made up for next day. It may be asked what was the use of this ? To what purpose or advantage did it tend ? In the first place it was much more pleasant and very much cooler travelling by moonlight than during the heat of the sun, and the driving dust and sand in daylight ; and again, instead of sleeping or trying to sleep in a

THE TOM-TOM.

small hot bedroom at Gampola, where, even if you did manage to dose off, you would speedily be aroused by the barking and yelling of paraya dogs, which lasted the whole night. And as if this was not enough, there was always sure to be some religious ceremony going on at the Buddhist temples or the swami house. The chief points in the devotion of the devotees apparently seemed to consist in the residents at the temple, or priests in charge, making as much noise during the whole of the night as they possibly could. The raptap of the tom-tom drum never ceased, although it sometimes ceased being heard, being utterly drowned in a louder one, and this louder one was the blowing of horns. And just as all the noises seemed combined and you would say, "They cannot be worse," the louder noise in its turn was also put down by one or rather a great many louder still!—and this king of noises was jackals howling and shrieking close to the verandah of the resthouse. We exclaim, "Oh! if we had only set off after dinner, during the fine moonlight, we should have been home by this time, in a fine cool climate, and an hour's doze on the couch would have been more refreshing than tossing about here, sleepless, eaten up with mosquitoes and other insects, and nearly driven mad by the beating of drums and blowing of horns." And Gampola in these times certainly was about the noisiest place on earth one ever tried to sleep in, not only from these causes but as it was on the great highway to Kandy from all the coffee districts; visitors would be constantly arriving all hours of the night, calling out for something to eat and drink both for themselves and horses, which of course disturbed those who required and desired a good night's rest. The lamp in the centre room was kept lighted all night, and the boys slept on the floor, ready to start up and open the door to any arrival, but the boys were heavy sleepers, and before they were started up all the sleepers in the bedrooms would be awaked out of sleep. Yet again, although the next forenoon we did fall asleep on the couch, and did not turn out to work, what matter, the conscience was easy—it had received a sop or sleeping draught, we were on the estate: time had not been exceeded, we had returned within the usual allowance of time! We were on the estate if we were wanted, but as well, far better, have stayed away, for there was nobody wanting us, only a chetti sitting on his hind legs at the bottom of the corner verandah post, with a whole lot of small papers tied up in his front cloth, which he wished to

PLENTY TIRED.

exchange for £ s d, and in case, as very, often was the case, some others might have more extensive claims, requiring greater urgency in settling, and which, after being settled, would leave no cash surplus to credit of master, the chetti had taken time by the fore-lock, and had been patiently sitting at the bottom of that post for three or four hours awaiting the arrival of master, and all the reward he receives for this long-suffering and enduring patience is a gruff order, to "get out of that—and—and come back to-morrow." As for the kanganies and coolies, they never did want us during working hours: quite the reverse. The head kangani would see everything was all right; according to his own story everything was right, nothing could go wrong so long as master trusted him; but if he was not trusted he could not be responsible for what might happen. "Master plenty tired; no need to come out. I will take and bring all the names in the afternoon." Who could resist this very sensible reasoning? The master is "plenty tired" and he began to wonder what possessed him to ride out during the night until he remembered the paryia dogs, tom-toms, and temple ceremonies at Gampola. From this cause, or rather to avoid it, he had done a hard day's work, the night previous, and so, must just turn day into night—and go to sleep. Of course there were no old residents then, in the same sense in which they are so called now: all were fresh British blood, and didn't the mosquitoes increase, multiply, get fat and flourishing? Any one who had been half-a-dozen years in the country was looked upon as quite an old hand, one who had come through some queer experience, and whose advice was worth taking. They had no idea of ever requiring to be patched up; there was nothing the matter with them, it was a fine healthy climate, and of course they would shortly pick up a piece of land, and after this was done, as a matter of course also, they would go home in three years, for did not coffee just take this time to give a very handsome pecuniary return, and what was the use remaining in Ceylon, just to watch the coffee trees, after they came into crop? And thus they went on. The old story, counting chickens before they were hatched. Worse than this, counting them before the eggs were laid, without ever taking into consideration the possibility that none might ever be layed!

There is an old Scotch saying "A stitch in time saves nine." If people had only been cautious and careful, and put on a patch in time, how many lives would have been saved, and how many more of

NO ASSISTANTS.

our old planters would no doubt have been alive and hearty at this day. Of course they had not the means, and more certainly not the opportunities afforded now for 'patching up.' Even a trip to Colombo was considered as something a good deal out of the way, and requiring a great deal of serious consideration and preparation, and likely to affect one's pocket in such a way, that it would take a good many months' pay to tide over the cost. As for a sea voyage that was out of the question altogether. There was no overland route, or, if there was, where could one lay hands on a hundred pounds for passage money? A hundred pounds! What superintendent ever saved a hundred pounds, or even a hundred pence, in these times? He might consider himself a very lucky fellow indeed, and quite an exception to the general rule, if he was not a hundred pounds or a hundred pence in debt, that is to say if he could get any one to give him credit, but there would not be much difficulty about getting credit, provided, and provided only, it was at a Kandy general store. They read the order, sent it out, probably by coolies waiting for the loads, and never so much as asked who Mr. So-and-so was, or where was the estate, or even if he was on an estate at all.

Well was it for us, we were then all young, fresh, and strong; the climate on the mountain sides was healthy, or, at all events, had not had time to induce any bad effects, for nothing could be more miserable, deplorably miserable, than illness on a coffee estate, or even anywhere, at that period of time. But, at that time, those who were owners, or in a superior charge of estates, never seemed to take into account the contingency of illness or depression of health of the resident superintendent, not even any temporary indisposition, because no provision was made, in event of this, to relieve him of his duties, or even assist him. It was quite a common state of affairs to find only one superintendent on three or four hundred acres of coffee or even more, with only a native conductor, or perhaps even only a head kangani, to assist him in the work. Not only this state of matters prevailed, but supposing even there were, which was often the case, some other assistants on a large estate, if they left to undertake some other charge, and so improve their position in moving on, the head superintendent would represent he did not require any further European assistance, he preferred native, and it was cheaper also for his employers. No doubt it would be very much additional trouble and work to himself, but what of that, he liked

POOR QUALITY OF WORK.

hard work, and he would clearly demonstrate, that a money saving of a hundred and fifty pounds per annum would be saved to his employers, and for his great additional work which would be entailed, would they give him fifty, as a rise of pay—and this would leave a saving of one hundred to themselves? In many cases, this was done, too good an opportunity to let slip, raise their much esteemed manager's pay fifty pounds, after doing so, be a hundred pounds in pocket themselves, as compared with the former money cost of superintendence! Now, in our present enlightened age of improvement, how we do look back with astonishment at such a course of proceeding. Did it never enter into the calculation of those who acted in this way, the money they lost, or would lose, by the coolies not being properly supervised, or indeed supervised at all, in the work. When we look back on the very small amount of work gone through by the coolies, and the inferior quality of the same also, as compared with the present times, the only conclusion to be arrived at is—what?

The coolies had better wages, they were a much stronger set of people as a rule, very few women or children amongst them, rice was plentiful and cheap, many estates were overstocked with coolies, had to refuse them, or enter into arrangements that they were only to work half time, or for their rice, for a period, previous to crop: everything was in favour of the planter in the labour supply. To what conclusion then can we come? It must be one of these two, or probably part of both; neither master nor coolies understood the quantity and quality of the work that should have been performed, where there was not a sufficient staff of superintendents allowed to overlook, either the quantity or quality of the works which were said to be performed, by the head kangani, who on his part was allowed a premium by the junior kanganies for allowing work to pass off as having been performed while it was not. We can't blame the superintendents of these times, although the blame is too often put upon them. They did their work according to the ideas of the times; their superiors ought to have known better, but, as they did not, they themselves were the only sufferers.

Then, the only resident managing superintendent, on a large estate, if he did require "patching up," or a small patch, one that required or called for an absence of a few weeks or months, it could not be done. The result was, the sore was not very bad, it was only a little tender, it might not break out for some time, perhaps not at all, and would just wear off in the same

A SAD STORY.

gradual way that it commenced, but instead of doing this it continued almost imperceptibly, so imperceptibly that the sufferer was under the impression that it was diminishing, or perhaps gone, to extend and increase, until, at last, there was a sudden great outbreak, and the sufferer was carried off to Kandy or Colombo, for change and medical advice, in fact, to be patched up too late, for the next accounts heard of him was that he was "patched up" for good and all, no further patching up would ever be required for him, for he was "patched up" in his "winding-sheet." We have some faint remembrance of a sad story, heard very long ago, so long, that we can hardly give it in such a way as to vouch for the exact truth of the details, but the general outline is we think that somewhere about Haputale, it must have been either on that estate or Kahagala as they were the only two properties there at the period referred to. Detached from all other districts, remote and alone, the nearest approach to it was by a wild bridle path, or more probably in these times, only a native pathway crossing the extensive grass, or prairie lands, between it and the turn of the Badulla road, a mile or so below the Wilson's Bungalow resthouse, from which it would be about fifteen or sixteen miles distant, more or less. On this estate, in that far remote wild, was a superintendent, solitary and alone, as far as regarded his own countrymen: he had not even an assistant. He had not been seen or heard of for a considerable time, when some one or other thought they would look up? He was found in his bungalow, dead, probably decomposed; the servants, if he had any servants, when they saw him dying, or dead, had "bolted," afraid in case they might get into trouble, with courts, or coroners' inquests; none knew how he died. What it may be asked about the coolies on the estate? Surely they could not be ignorant of the event. We can't say, having only a very hazy remembrance of the case. Perhaps, as was possible, there were no coolies on the estate, or, what was more probable, there might have been only a very few, and they were quite aware of the illness of the master, and took the opportunity, the very favorable one, one which might not occur again, to run away. But we can hardly think so; we have a much more favorable opinion of the Malabar cooly than to suppose he would do this. Whatever tricks he did and would play on, and at the expense of, the master, when he was well, we do not believe he would treat him so scurvily when he was sick. Probably the correct view of the circumstance would prove to be, that the master had died suddenly, and that the servants and coolies, not know-

HOLIDAYS.

ing what to do, well knowing something must be done promptly, having no neighbouring planter before whom they could lay the case, and being seized and struck with fear, at the very unusual and unexpected responsibility so suddenly devolved upon them, took the simple way of shirking the responsibility in a way which many of their betters, who ought to have known better, had done before them, and bolted. Now supposing there had, as there certainly ought to have, been an assistant on this estate, the man's life would perhaps have been saved, at all events it would have been known how or from what cause he died. Any shade of suspicion of foul play, on the part of the servants, would have either been confirmed or disproved, and last but not least the proprietors of the estate would not have been left without coolly labor, which for long afterwards it was difficult to re-establish. "A bad devil is on the estate": so said the coolies.

Of course we had our holidays then, as now, the patching up time, but rather a great mistake it was. Instead of being "patched up," we generally left our estate in very good health, and returned, in order to be patched up from the ill effects of our trip, and it would happen so. Having arranged for our absence during the holidays (!) a cooly would be sent off, in advance, with the invariable tin box, and, having begged or borrowed an old pony, off we start, in great glee, with the usual horsekeeper behind. We very soon found out what sort of a nag we had to deal with, for he would not go along any faster than a slow walk. Spurs were of no avail his sides seemed quite spur-proof; the only effect any amount of spurring had was to produce a snort, or groan, and then, very probably, a stand-still; if we continued to dig into his ribs, he would gradually edge sideways towards the outside of the road, right on to the brink of a frightful precipice, with a river rolling and tossing hundreds of feet below, seemingly quite determined to murder his rider, even although that foul act would most certainly entail a suicidal death upon himself. He was on the brink of the precipice, and had come to a stand-still; the more we spurred the nearer he went; one hind foot was over, the earth and stones were rolling down the steep declivity. We throw the reins to the horsekeeper, and throw ourselves over upon the road, upon which we trip and tumble, looking nervously up, fully expecting that both pony and horsekeeper had gone over the steep abyss; there was the animal tearing and eating away at the short thick grass, on the edge of the precipice, just as if he had no food for the last day or two, and the horsekeeper

A WONDERFUL PONY.

sitting on his hind legs, busily engaged in disengaging some betel leaves out of his cloth! It was perfectly evident, the korsekeeper knew the habits of his charge, and the animal knew those of his keeper, better, far better, than we knew either of theirs. The horsekeeper now brought up the pony, adjusted the bridle, held the stirrup leather, and suggested a "mount." We look fearfully at the long extent of precipitous descent, on the low side of the road, stretching for many a mile, in advance, and say, "No; we will walk." With reins in hand, we proceed in advance of our gallant steed, and he begins to move his legs, but they don't move long; he again comes to a stand-still, plants his fore feet firmly in the ground, and remains fixed there, in that position. It is perfectly evident he won't lead: there is therefore only another resource, for an animal, even should he be of the two-legged species, if he won't lead, he must be driven. The stirrup irons are fixed close up on the leathers, the bridle reins thrown over the hinder part of the saddle, and the pony is driven in this way just as if he were a cow; he drives very well, always making a dart or grab at any grass, leaves, or any green thing within reach of his mouth, until it begins to strike us rather forcibly, what a very silly proceeding this is, being bothered in this way, detained on the road, all for getting along this unhappy animal, and what for? What are we at all this trouble about, when he is of no use? Our indignation rises to a high pitch, a general halt takes place, and the horsekeeper is sent into a piece of jungle, close by, to cut a good stout stick, and, during these dread proceedings, the object of them is making the most of his time, and has pulled down a young plantain tree, close to a native boutique, and before the unfortunate owner has time to get up off his cross legs and keep the invader at bay the half of the young plantain tree is crunched up and down his throat. What a stomach that pony must have had, for there was nothing green which he would not make a grab at and devour!

A new course of proceeding is now adopted; we mount the pony once more, and once more move on. The horsekeeper keeps close behind, and on the least sign of a collapse on the part of the animal gives a great shout, and belabours the hind quarters with the big stick. This plan is found to answer, so we just settle on the saddle, legs hanging free, spurs being of no use, the bridle also is knotted, and thrown over the mane; after some time the stick is all smashed and broken up, so, at the next convenient piece of jungle, a halt is come to, and the same

NO SLEEP.

course of proceedings adopted in procuring a fresh stick, as has been before described. At last, as the shades of evening approached, our horsekeeper, who knows the country, points out the estate to which we are destined, apparently yet far off, up on a steep ridge, but, as the ascent is commenced, over stones, rocks, such roads, the wretched old pony begins to "fig up," he now steps out briskly, picking his way over, and across portions of road, with perfect ease, where we would have some difficulty in getting over on foot. What a wonderful animal! He won't move a step on the plain well-kept public highway, but as soon as he gets on a break-neck rugged jungle path, more like a water-course than anything else, he pegs along bravely; the pony, like many of his riders, knows very well what he is about; he knows from many a past experience, that now the bungalow and stable is not far off, and that darkness is not far off, and that it will serve no end, but quite the contrary, to lag behind and refuse to move. This is what is called animal instinct, which in many cases approaches the borders of reasoning power. So much so, that some have said it is reason, but, had it been reason, the pony would have reasoned earlier in the day, and not only saved himself many a dig of the spurs, and application of sticks, and have arrived at his journey's end a few hours earlier, and had a good feed of paddy, gram and guinea grass, instead of sticking out his fore-legs on the edge of the road, refusing to move, and eating dried-up grass, full of earthy roots. We have met, in our day, a good many of the human species, of somewhat of the same disposition as this pony, and if reasoning educated men at times are to be met with acting during the journey of life they are on in the same way we need not be surprised at the actions of a dumb animal. A hearty welcome from our friend soon makes us forget the miseries of the day, and we spend the evening very cheerily together; but our friend is living a rough life, he has no spare bed-room. What use would it be, when he has no spare bed? The couch in the sitting-room will answer the purpose. Tired and weary with the exertions of the day, we soon retire for the night, on the couch; after possibly about an hour's sleep we awake, and sleep no more that night. The mattress is as if it were full of knots and stones, as if all the hair in it had become calcined, and resolved itself into rough pebbles; this was bad enough, but we began to feel very itchy in the skin, with an inclination to scratch. What could it be, was it the exertions on the long journey, bringing out a rash? No, it was

FRIDAY NIGHT.

not that, we won't tell what it was; it is quite enough to say, we slept not at all that night, and had to get up, and walk up and down the verandah. We remembered our own room and bed, with no pretensions at all, but where we could, and did, sleep comfortably, and we began to think seriously, that this was a somewhat extraordinary commencement of the holiday season! Holidays indeed, far better be out with the coolies all day at home, when some comfort, in a plain rustic way, was to be had, after the day's work was done, but we were on our holiday excursion, and were ashamed to go back. During the day, we went about with our host, visiting all the different works, just the same sort of life as at home, but only without any interest in the work; we soon got tired of this, and lounged about the house all day, when the host was absent at his work, which was a very tiresome way of spending our holidays. At last we could stand it no longer, and we went away to visit another friend, in another district, where just the same sort of way of spending the time was gone about. The only really useful and practical lesson we picked up on our travels, was, never to arrive at a bungalow on Tuesday evening on Wednesday morning, or on Friday evening, or Saturday morning, as, if we did, on these dates, there was nothing to eat but rice and curry, and perhaps even not that: these were the fasting days, and it proceeded from this, that, where beef was killed and bread supplied, these and sundry other supplies were issued on Wednesday and Saturday mornings, and the coolies sent off for the provender did not arrive till the Wednesday and Saturday evenings.

Thus on these evenings, and the following days, you were always sure of, at any rate, a beefsteak. We suspect nothing of this sort of thing exists in the present time? When two fellows get dull on a Friday or Tuesday afternoon, after work, and one says to the other, "Slow work this. Let's go over and look up old Dickens, and dine"; we suspect it is never said now to the fellow who proposes it, "No don't, we will just bother him, and make him uncomfortable, Friday night, you know." It has often been said in the olden times, and where it was not openly said it was felt in the mind. We have even known a hearty good fellow of a neighbour, who perhaps had been from home a few days, probably to Kandy, and who of course had not used up the half of his supply of provisions, and knowing that we would of course be upon "short commons," would write a note, "Come over and chat," as the saying was, the purpose of

THE BOX COOLY.

which was, "Lots of grub here, Friday night with you, I suppose. Come over and lend us a hand to eat it up, otherwise it will just fall a prey to the capacious and rapacious maws of the boys." During the holiday season, bungalow after bungalow was visited, in different districts, just under the same circumstances, as have already been described. Tired of lounging about our friend's bungalow, we would go out with him to the works, just to see, what we saw every day at home, coffee and weeds, pruning and weeding, with this difference that as we took no interest in the works, of course, to say the least, they were not interesting, we would even retire, and sit under the shape of a rock, until our friend was ready on his return to the bungalow—certainly not a very lively way of spending the holidays. We were disgusted with our holidays, gave them up, and started on the return home, before our leave of absence was half expired. Down the old bridle path, from Ambagamuwa and Dolosbage, rough and rugged it was in these times, and glad we were once more on emerging into the high road, close to Gampola. It was raining, it always rained in Ambagamuwa, and we were wet through, on entering the verandah of the resthouse. Calling out for the cooly with the box of dry clothes, there was no response. He, no doubt, was sitting comfortable and dry in some wayside hut, had even seen master pass, and had hidden both himself and the box, in a dark back corner; after master had turned the corner, no doubt he looked out, to see if it was not going to be fair, and, as there seemed no present chance of it, he rolled himself up in his blanket, and went to sleep! So, having called for a room, we strip off the saturated clothes, give them a good wring, until all the water is squeezed out, and, then—put them on again; the heat of the body soon dries them now, or, if a streak of sunshine should burst out from behind the black clouds, a short stand out in his rays will finish the drying process. This is a somewhat brief outline of travelling in the jungle. In those times, we soon learned never to lose sight of the box cooly, with the change of clothes, especially never to leave him behind, and, if he was in advance, always to take care we did not pass him unawares; we also learned, if possible, to have a clothes box of a peculiar shape, or colour, or with some easily discerned mark on it. So that, in passing the native boutiques, if the box cooly was lounging there, the box would immediately catch the eye, and bring us to a halt, for in no way was it safe to pass on, unless we saw the box cooly started, and passed

THE GAMPOLA FERRY.

on first. The box cooly is arrived, the rain ceased, and we leave the old Gampola resthouse and old Young. It was but a short way to the river side; it must have rained heavily up-country, for the river is unusually swollen, up to the very top of its banks, the water tumbles and tosses, will it be safe to cross? All old residents must recollect the old ferry boat: just an old heavy rude raft, propelled by boatmen, with long poles when they would reach the ground, and with strong oars when they were in mid-stream. Many a weary time has been spent by the passing traveller at the Gampola ferry, for it always happened, just when likely you were in some particular hurry, that the ferry boat was on the other side of the river, or, what was even worse, had just started for the other side, a few minutes before you arrived at the river's edge. We get into the boat, pony, box, cooly, and all. The boatmen look grave and say, "*Bōhoma watura*," (plenty water or flood). We soon found out they had more than one reason for using this expression, and the chief reason was not the very apparent one, but had a hidden meaning, which means, if you like to take the hint, a tip to the boatmen, which we sometimes did; the amount was small, say a shilling at a time, and as he became known, in return for the expected tip, they, when they saw our arrival on the other side, would speedily cross, and take us across, while others, who never gave any tips, would have to wait the convenience of the boatmen, and sit under the shadow of the bank during a hot sun, or under their umbrella, if they had one, during a heavy rain. It was a very easy and speedy affair crossing the river when the water was low, or during the dry season, but a very different matter altogether when the river was in "spate," as it was now.

The strong current, of course, was always strongest in the middle of the river, so the boat, or rather barge, starting from the Gampola side would be propelled by long sticks, in the hands of the boatmen; these sticks were pressed against the ground at the bottom of the river, and so the barge slowly moved up the stream, close to the edge of the land. One not aware of the dodge would be apt to suppose, they were not crossing the river, but slowly and steadily going up the stream, which was the case. After having pulled a good way up, the boat would be sent right into the current in the middle of the river, and down we go, with the raging torrent; the old pony stretches out his fore and hind legs, planted fairly on the planking, and looks very un-

“BOHOMA WATURA.”

happy ; the box cooly rests his box on the edge of the barge, takes off his headcloth and wraps it tight round his waist, fully prepared for any extremity ; we take off our spurs, put them in the pocket, and grasp the mane of the pony, for the barge has no railings. We are now in the mid stream and full current of a raging torrent. We look in advance, and see the water tumbling in full force, until it is lost to sight in the jungle round the corner. The boatmen now stand by the oars, and pull away, to get out of the mid-stream, but their exertions seem of no avail—down goes the boat—it approaches the narrow shelving landing-place on the other side ; if it passes that, we are carried away by the stream down into the jungles beyond any possibility of getting up again. There is the white foam on the huge rocks and boulders ahead, the boat will be dashed against them, and we, the box cooly, and the old pony, will become a supper for the alligators ! Something of the same thoughts seem to be passing through the mind of the box cooly, he is looking very grave and mutters “*Swāmi, swāmi,*” and just then, as if in answer to the call, perhaps the box cooly thinks he has saved our lives, and may afterwards cast it up to the old pony, the ferry raft gives a short swing round, in answer to the sticks and oars of the boatmen, and quietly touches the landing-place, in the quiet eddy.

The ferry-men, who were quite used to this sort of thing, wipe their faces and say, “*Bohoma watura.*” It has often struck us as strange so few accidents happened in crossing the Gampola ferry, having only a recollection of one, but no lives were lost ; during a flood the boat missed the landing place, or the rope thrown on shore from the boat to be grasped by some one there had missed, and down goes the boat, into the rapids and jungles below, but there was neither accident nor loss of life, the only inconvenience being that of course the barge could not be worked up the river again, until the flood moderated.

These floods at the ferry never could be calculated on. It might be a bright hot day at Gampola, in fact, no rain for days, and the river would be tumbling and rolling down, swollen up to its banks, and quite dangerous to cross ; this proceeded from heavy rains falling on the mountain ranges up-country, where the river passed through, and thus it was, that, during the rainy seasons, one never could be sure, when this ferry would be in flood or not.

If you were pushed for time, you had always to calculate allowances for this, when coming down from

THE GAMPOLA BRIDGE.

the interior. We used to send on our horsekeepers in advance, a few miles before reaching the ford, to tell the boatmen that master was coming, and wait, not to start until he came, which they generally did, and if coming from the Kandy side, before starting from the resthouse, he would take the horse's bridle in hand, and send the horsekeeper to have a peep, if the ferry boat was on this side. If it was not, we just waited until news came it was crossing, or had crossed. This ferry used to be a great pest if a cooly or coolies with supplies were late, or long of coming. We had no hold upon them: it was the Gampola ferry; but, whether it was or not, there can be no doubt but the ferry men frequently extorted money from and oppressed the coolies, especially the new immigrant gangs, who were ignorant of the rules of ferries and customs of the country. What hosts of old memories rise up, when we recollect of these days of the Gampola ferry* and of the time we used to sit on the banks of the river waiting for the ferry boat?

The ferry boat is now a matter of history, if any one likes to write a history about it. The Gampola bridge was completed at the end of December 1858; no accident has ever befallen it, and having seen so many floods, and been so well tried, we hope nothing will go wrong with it now. We may now ride over the Gampola river, without drawing rein, and not give the subject a thought, but when you cross that beautiful bridge, and look down on the swollen river rolling below, think of the many weary coolies and indignant planters who have waited on its banks for the old ferry boat. Both sides of the river, more especially the one next Gampola, were, or was, a favourite halting-place for bullock carts, either from choice or against their will: in the former case water was abundant, for either cart drivers or cattle. The former might frequently be seen, standing up to their middle in the river, beside their cattle, scrubbing and washing them; they would catch hold of them by the horns and rub off all the dirt and dust from their bodies, washing and cleaning even their eyes, ears, and nostrils; most of the cattle would make a sudden bolt and start, as if they had an objection to being cleaned, and preferred a dirty dusty skin, up the bank of the river towards Gampola at full speed. The driver, tightening his thin strip of cloth round his middle, his long wet hair hanging and flying over his shoulders, would dart

* Of which a view may be seen in Tennent's book.—ED.

HORSEKEEPER IN FRONT.

off in hot pursuit ; away they run right through the village, the pursuer shouting out “ Wo, wo ! ” “ Ba, ba ! ” “ *Hitapan !* ” until he gets close up and catches hold of the animal’s tail ! They now both tug in different ways, and the driver twists round very forcibly the bullock’s tail, which somehow or other seems to answer the effect of a rudder, for a sudden side bolt is made into an adjoining shed, and the captive is led back to the river to have his washing completed. Dozens and scores of carts were all ranged up in rows, on the beach ; on the shady sides of them the cartmen lay stretched out at full length, asleep, or, perhaps, cooking their rice and curry, and mixing up food for their cattle in a large tub, which was which always carried along with the cart, and, to save space, was slung under it attached to the cross axle, when travelling along. These long strings or batches of carts used to take a long time to cross the ferry, as the raft would only take one or two across at a time, and as Europeans and horses had always the preference, if the traffic with them was plentiful, many a weary time the cartmen had to wait. However, they never grumbled, but just took it all as a matter of course. They would be pushing a cart into the boat, perhaps it was already in, when up galloped a planter, and dismounted at the water’s edge ; the cart would be pushed back, and the planter and his horse taken over instead ; all sorts of foot passengers would be awaiting the starting of the boat, but they might wait a while. However, when a gentleman on horseback makes his appearance, they can get across now ; there is no further delay, and they all push in, until the raft is quite full, overladen, and the rush is only stopped by the boatmen pushing off with their long poles. When we were short of rice on the estates, and the carts containing it were long past due, and we were off in search of them, if we did not find them, some accounts were generally to be heard of them at this ferry. In order not to be detained in the crossing, the knowing traveller, going down country from Pussellawa, when he reached the flat road within a mile or so of the ferry, would despatch his horsekeeper on, in advance, to detain the ferry boat until his arrival. The boatmen were always civil and obliging, and, if told a gentleman on horseback would be up in a few minutes, they would always wait. If you were in the habit of travelling the road frequently, it would be a good plan to tell them the name of your estate, and give them a tip at times. A few coppers would be thankfully received, and it would be well-spent

money, for the next time or times they recognized you, or your horsekeeper was sent on in advance to say you were coming, take an old traveller's word for it, there would be no detention at the Gampola ferry. These ferry men had nothing at all to do with the fares or tolls received from travellers : they were merely hired boatmen, and the proprietor of the ferry in a small house at the side of the road above the banks of the river, with a toll-bar across the road, where he received the fares from the passers-by. So that you stepped out of and into the boat without any trouble or hindrance.

What a meeting place for friends was the old Gampola ferry ! Gangs of coolies proceeding to their country would meet other gangs coming in, and hear all the "home news" and state of the roads ; the immigrant coolies would hear from their friends, homeward-bound, the state of the labour supply on the different estates, all about the "good" and "bad" masters, what place to go to, and what to avoid, for the bulk of the immigrant coolies then, probably, had not definitely made up their mind what estates to go to ; even if they had, whether or not they would be received and taken on was doubtful, for these were the days of a plentiful labour supply, before crop three days' work a week or even for their rice. Coolies going on messages, or with loads to and from all the Pussellawa, and Ramboda, and Badulla estates, met at the ferry, and had their small talk as to what the other was carrying, and if the master often sent to Kandy for beer and brandy, it was all known at this ferry ; coolies carrying broken pulpers, fly-wheels, cylinders, taking to Kandy for repairs, and others carrying out "patched up" ones, all met at the ferry, and all the smashes that had taken place in machinery on the estates were all very well known and discussed. Also, amongst planters themselves, how many here met at that ferry, and never met again ! How little did they think, as the one waved his hat in the departing raft, and the other flourished his riding-whip, as he cantered off up to the road, that they would never meet again ! This recalls a personal reminiscence. Coming out of the ferry boat on the Gampola side, being bound for Kandy, two gentlemen are standing on the shore leaning on their horses' necks, awaiting the boat. One of them we recognize and shake hands with, who introduces us to the other. A good stare is exchanged he exclaims, "Can you be the boy I last met at — in the old country ?" And we say, "Can you be — ?" Just so, we are both the same. A short talk and the boat

RETURNING AFTER A HOLIDAY.

is shoving off time enough however to be informed that our old boy friend has come from Bombay to try and recruit his shattered health, and he is bound for Nuwara Eliya. He had also said, on his way back, which would be in about ten days, he would visit us, and have a talk over old times. But we never saw him again. Nuwara Eliya somehow has often proved quite the contrary to a beneficial change to visitors from the Indian presidencies in search of health. We have known a good many who, after giving Nuwara Eliya a fair trial, have become worse, instead of better, and eventually left the sanatorium in a much worse state of health than when they arrived at it. Our own experience and opinion is that it is a very nice change for those who are in good or fair health, and if the climate agrees with them it will soon make them stronger and more robust, indeed so well "patched up," that not the semblance of a "patch" will be left upon them. But it is not exactly the sort of place suitable for an invalid or for certain sorts of complaints, such as pulmonary, sciatic, or any sorts of rheumatism. This never used to be taken into consideration, and it used to be, perhaps still is the constant cry, when one required a little patching up, "Go," or "Let us go, to Nuwara Eliya." Personally we don't believe in Nuwara Eliya, and dislike both it and the climate, but as it has become a very fashionable place, the less said of this opinion the better, being quite certain, that, if we don't believe in Nuwara Eliya, nobody else will believe us on this point.* These remarks are only "by the way." The climate made our friend worse, he hurriedly left the place, and of course did not write us. There is an old churchyard in Edinburgh called "Old Grayfriars," and we sometimes go in and look at a grave in a peaceful quite corner; green grows the grass over the small mound, and, as we gaze upon this mound, long past memories spring up. It is nearly thirty-two years, since we waved an adieu, for a few days only (we thought), at the Gampola ferry, to our old friend; little did either of us think then, that, after such a long period of time, I should stand over his grave, and that that grave would recal the memory of our last meeting at the Gampola ferry. He had hurried home to be "patched up," and was "patched up," but patching up seldom makes one sound again, always liable to a relapse. Our friends may ask "Are you patched up?" Yes, patched up once more is

P. D. MILLIE.

* For persons run down by the heat of the low-country and needing a change, as also for persons debilitated by fever uncomplicated with liver or dysentery, the climate of Nuwara Eliya is exceedingly valuable.—Ed.

PUSSELLAWA.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

DE OMNIBUS REBUS.

Our readers will remember that last chapter closed with some reminiscences of the old Gampola ferry, and of the meeting of friends that sometimes took place there. Also, that we were on the return home from an annual holiday trip. Late in the afternoon the ferry was crossed, and onwards we jog as fast as the old pony will go, which was at the average rate of two miles an hour, up the Pass towards Pussellawa. What a fine climate you get into on reaching Wagahapitiya, as compared with the steamy heat of the low-country, and as the cool mountain breezes whistle through the airholes of the double crowned sun hat, we felt thankful then, and feel more so now, that we had such a fine climate to live in, as we believe it is just about as healthy a one as any in the world—that is to say if you don't forget you are in the tropics, which one is sometimes apt to, and take ordinary care of yourself. The old Pussellawa resthouse stood on a knoll above the high-road, and the small village, with the whole of the Rothschild and Monaragala estates, spread out to view in front, and the approach of it was at the sharp turn of the road, with the Black Forest coffee above, and the Rothschild below. Now, we had no intention at all of visiting, or remaining at this resthouse, being quite tired of resthouses, in so far as our financial resources were at a low ebb. True we were well known, and could “pay next time”—but we were anxious to push home, which was seven miles off. “But it takes two to make a bargain,” which the pony seemed perfectly well aware of, or, if not, he was of a different opinion from his rider, and had made up his mind to have his own views carried out at all risks. He evidently knew very well where he was, and that he was close to the resthouse stable, and, if his rider did not require or desire a rest, why, he did, and was determined to have his own way. As we entered the bazar, the pony pricked up his ears and went off at a trot. The approach up to the resthouse was at a sharp turn of the road, at a bridge just below the Black Forest estate, and when we came to this approach, the pony made a dart up, but, being from past experiences prepared for this action, he was checked; he then wheels round and round, on the road, eventually backing into the drain, both his hind quarters fixed against the bank, and his forefeet planted on the edge of the road; there he remained fixed and immovable. All the loungers about the bazaar now came out, and were highly entertained at the spectacle; our indignation at this animal now

CHARACTER AND CREDIT.

became intense here we sat a show and subject of laughter to all bazar residents. We dismount, get him out of the drain, but he won't lead; we mount again; round and round he goes on the road, gradually and surely approaching the road up to the resthouse, until, quite before we are aware, down goes his head between his legs, and off he goes up to the resthouse, at a sharp canter. We never knew him canter before, and were quite taken aback, so much so, that, before our presence of mind was restored, the pony was into the open stables, that stood on the right hand of the resthouse, up into a stall, and buried his mouth into some refuse grass, left by a previous occupant just as if he was starved and, instead of having finished a large bundle of grass at Gampola, three hours before, had had no food for three days. Seeing we were fairly in for it, or rather being ashamed to have it even suspected that the pony had run off with his rider up to the resthouse, we enter the verandah, and sit down just as we had purposely ridden up to have a rest. The appu comes up and asks, if master will take any dinner? The reply is "No, not hungry—have dined," or something to this effect. We may mention, however, now, at this remote period of time, that all these replies were simply untrue, because we would have liked very much to have dined, we were very hungry, and ought to have said yes, and the reason we did not say what we did was, there were only two rupees in our pocket, and we had a pretty correct idea, that next day would find our little account very considerably overdrawn; true, credit would have been given, but we had not then got hardened, and were afraid and ashamed, in case it might be suspected we were not worth five shillings. This sort of feeling however soon wore off, and a year or so afterwards we would go in for "tick," just the same as all the rest of them, with this difference however, that we always paid the very first subsequent opportunity, and thus at an early period of life established a character for punctual and correct payments.* Many young men starting in life

* It would have been well for another young Scotch planter, who came to Ramboda as Mr. Millie was preparing to leave it, if he had acted on like principles. Nothing would serve this unprincipled scamp, who had probably never tasted wine in Scotland, but to run up long bills for champagne. The result was a disgraceful bolt, the Pussellawa resthouse-keeper alone being cheated out of £30 to £40. The difference between Mr. Millie and this man was that between an honest man and a rogue.—Ed.

PUSSELLAWA RESTHOUSE.

have little or no idea of the value of this character. If it is once established, and justly established, you can always, when you want, or require, get credit anywhere, without the least hesitation; correct and punctual payments of your little accounts will in course of time become a habit, and as you have been correct and methodical in small matters you will, as a matter of course, be so also in more important ones, and thus it may eventually result, that your habits of punctuality in pecuniary matters will lead to your being easily able to obtain credit and assistance, when you ultimately "invest in coffee." "He's never in debt, and always pays." Are there any of our readers, who are in debt, and never pay, if they can shirk payment? Give it up: it won't do, it won't pay. We have proved it frequently in our life experience, or rather have seen it proved in others, that it is one of the fixed certainties of this uncertain life, that it does not pay, not to pay. Being impressed with these sentiments in our early years, they were probably carried somewhat to excess, in going without our dinner rather than get into debt for it.

We strolled out to look at the pony. He had no thought of debt or paying for his dinner; there he stood looking as comfortable as could be, he had finished all the left grass in the rack;—and had collected with his fore-feet all the dry paddy straw litter and had eaten that up too! There he stood swollen out like a drum, with not the shadow of a thought about payment or who was to pay. We sighed as we looked at his happy frame of mind, and went into the resthouse verandah, and sat down. "Boy," we say, "how is it there is nobody in the resthouse?" "Plenty gentlemen in Mr. and Mrs. Carruthers' parlour," was the reply. The resthouse was then kept by Mr. Carruthers and his wife, who occupied private premises for themselves close to the kitchen and servants' rooms on the left of the resthouse, and it used to be quite the custom in this as in other resthouses, for travellers, if, or even whether or no, there was no company in the public room, to step into the landlord's rooms, and have a "crack." On asking who the gentlemen are, we are told L—, of the Peacock Hill, R—, and fighting C— of Dimbula. This latter gentleman received his surname from his always settling every argument or dispute that seemed to go against him, by offering, frequently insisting upon, fighting his opponent who had the best of the argument, until few argued with him, and he had his own way in everything in so far as talking, boasting, and bragging would carry him,

PROVISIONS FOR DIMBULA.

but these sort of fellows sometimes meet with a check, and it so happened, one day, on being opposed somewhat more persistently than usual, it might probably be on purpose, by one who knew his man, and knew he was his match in strength, the usual offer of fighting was made, and accepted : the result of which was our fighting acquaintance got such a dose of it as sickened him of this sort of thing for some time, indeed people afterwards said it quite cured him, so that even his former victims, who used to be quite passive under his threats and offers, or rather orders, to fight, would now take up his former position and insist upon him fighting with them, but he would not.

It was just about this time the Dimbula estates had commenced. Pussellawa resthouse was the terminus of the carts, with rice and stores from Colombo, which were stored by Carruthers. The only access to these estates was across the patanas down to and across the Kotmale river, and on in the same way on the other side. And thus it was the Pussellawa resthouse on Saturday or Sunday was generally frequented by the early or pioneer Dimbula planters, who came down with their coolies for rice and other supplies. No wonder that the Dimbula estates then could not get a sufficient supply of labour ; we wonder how the coolies would stand this sort of thing now, having to carry their rice from Pussellawa to Dimbula, over roads, or rather paths, which were rather difficult and dangerous to get over without any load at all, without taking account of a bushel of rice : we forget, but surely the coolies would not be made or expected to carry a full bushel across this wretched track. But what will our readers say, when we vouch for the fact, that an old acquaintance of these days, since dead, and no wonder, having no coolies on his new clearing, which was not at all an unusual state of matters, used to walk to the resthouse on a Saturday, spend the Sunday there, and start back early on Monday morning with his own week's supply of provisions on his back, which were half a bushel of rice, some curry-stuffs, and a pumpkin or salt-fish. We never heard if he cooked them himself : in all probability he had a servant of some sort. So here was a case of master, cooly-fashion, carrying his own rice and curry-stuffs ; worse than this, for, while carrying them for himself, was he not only doing so, but also for his boy ? Just let the Dimbula planters of the present day think over this ; just let them fancy—fancy, it was no fancy, but stern reality—the pioneers of their now beautiful district, toiling along the grass lands below Tyspane and Bogawatte estates, laden

NO PINT BOTTLES.

with rice, salt-fish, and curry-stuffs, and let us just dwell on this subject a little and also fancy what without doubt was the case. The boy at the bungalow or rather grass or talipot hut, and feeling very hungry on a Sunday afternoon, the rice having been all done on Saturday evening, going out to the top of a rising ground or round the turn of some jungle path, casting longing glances to see if there was no appearance of master with that rice. It was getting dark, and nobody was to be seen, and just further suppose the bitter disappointment of that boy, at having no rice that night. He would bewail his hard fate. He would leave. He could not stop with a master who treated him so, who was no doubt enjoying himself at Pussellawa, making a "night of it" with his friends with plenty of rice and curry, even beer, while he was left here alone very hungry. It had been dark for half-an-hour; the boy, as a last and only resource, had gone to sleep, when he suddenly wakes up. Master is shouting out, "You lazy rascal; asleep, fire out, nothing to cook rice with, after having carried it for twenty miles," The boy would start up, become all animation, and say he did not think that master was coming, for he had been down the path, down to the very river to meet master, and to help him to carry that rice. The master might believe this or not, as he liked, as this was thirty-one years ago. Very probably he did, and supposed he had secured the services of a most affectionate and considerate servant. And thus it was the old Pussellawa resthouse was a general rendezvous of the old Dimbula planters.

We cannot get the old pony out of our head: how comfortable he looks after his feed of dry paddy straw. We are getting very uncomfortable, muster up courage, and say, "Boy, we will take something before starting; we suppose you have no bread?" "None," was the prompt reply. "Well, some hard biscuits, a bit of cheese, and a pint bottle of beer. The reply was, "No pint bottles got." This used to be a very common answer. Now we don't mean to make any positive assertion, but simply suspect, had very grave suspicions, that the keeping of 'no pint bottles' was 'a dodge,' because the result of this reply almost invariably was, "Well, bring a quart." The resthouse-keepers might well reason, what is the use of having pints when they just prevent us from selling quarts, double the quantity. Now here was a pretty mess; we had committed ourselves by saying rashly we would take something before starting; a bottle of beer would be 1s 9d or 2s; there were no pints, and

THE EAGLE'S NEST.

so we say half a glass of brandy and some water. The boy does not go away, but looks sternly and says "Never sell half glasses." We are driven into a corner, and in desperation say, "Well, bring a whole one." Our dinner is done. The hard biscuits on the plate are all eaten up, so is the cheese, and the last drop of brandy and water drained off, and we say "Boy, what is to pay? Mind the pony has had no food?" "Bread and cheese two shillings, brandy one shilling—three shillings." The two rupees are dislodged from their lurking place, and the boy is requested to bring the change; when he returns he looks as if he quite expected us to say "Keep that shilling," but as it was our last we did not say it. On the contrary, we had to ask for the change, upon which it was delivered up, with the reply "Beg pardon, forgot." But leaving we step into Mr. Carruthers' private room to see the company. L—— was going on talking a lot of stuff and nonsense. We rebuke him, telling him to behave himself in presence of a lady, upon which Mrs. Carruthers said, "Tut, tut, let the poor man alone, there are no ladies here. I am just in charge of the resthouse, you know, and see that all you wild fellows are made comfortable when on your travels, and hard work it is at times. Tut, there's no ladies here, just a plain honest woman that never hears what you say, and cares as little so long as you pay the bill." "And," chimes in L——, "as I am just a plain honest man, and have no pretension to anything grand, and (staring well at the writer) we will all agree there are no gentlemen here, so it's all right." On asking him, if he meant any personal offence, he said, "If you consider yourself offended leave the room and then my remark will be surely correct." He then came out and apologized, saying it was all a joke; it was impossible to be angry with him, as he was no one's enemy but his own. It was now about 9 o' clock at night, and the moon was shining clearly, as we lugged the old pony out of his stall, and forcibly drove him down to the high-road; he seemed resigned to his fate, and actually started on his usually slow pace, without a struggle. After getting through the Helboda Gap, he seemed to know where he was, and suddenly burst out into a good sharp trot, so suddenly as nearly to dislodge us from the saddle, and, on attempting to pull him up, it was impossible to do so, in fact he actually broke out into a canter. What an intelligent animal, no doubt he saw that snug little stable, a good way up the hill, at the Eagle's Nest. The bungalow called by this name was now soon reached, and the pony

THE JOURNEY'S END.

made happy with a comfortable lodging and plenty of grass, and as horseflesh then could not proceed further up the hill than this, we commence the scramble, on foot, as the moon was shining bright. We found then, as frequently afterwards, that it was easier travelling on foot or indeed on horseback over bad roads at night than during daylight. It is wonderful how many rough stones holes, rocks, and logs, one can manage to leave behind when they are partially or even totally hidden by gloom, or darkness. Many a pitch dark night we have gone up and down that hill, before any road was cut, just on the cooly track, formerly an old watercourse straight up and down, without a stumble, or scratch, while, in good daylight, we have made many a miss, the results of which remain marked on our shins to this day. And it is just the same in the up and down hill journey of life. We firmly believe, on this journey many of our greatest difficulties have been passed or got over, in the dark, without any very great difficulty, never noticed until they were passed, or even never at all. Had we seen them, in a formidable array, staring us in front, plainly saying "Go back, no road here," perhaps we would have turned : and as we turned on a roundabout easier way perhaps we might have stumbled over a precipice ! Keep the path, rough and rugged as it may be. If you stumble you will get up again if you persevere, you will reach the journey's end, very likely with some abrasions of the skin, or good hard knocks. What matter, if in the end you accomplish the journey, and don't go over the precipice ? Our readers may say, "Your argument is not sound, it's all luck and chance, you might have been killed or maimed for life." We might have been, but were not, and we have frequently before remarked that we have little belief in luck and chance, at least not to the same extent as many. The simple fact is, that, when one is travelling over a rough road in the dark, whether it is a jungle path or the path of life, you walk or scramble much more cautiously and warily than if you saw all about and before you plainly enough. Just to simplify my meaning, many of us have heard of, seen, or even possessed (the writer had possessed many a time), a horse or pony which it was hardy safe to ride on the well-kept high-road : he required a good sharp look-out, and if you got carelessly gazing about without attending to your bridle-hand down he would suddenly come, skinning his knees and pitching you over his neck and head. But that same horse, when on a rugged jungle path, is perfectly

AN ELEPHANT.

to be trusted; throw the bridle over his neck, and let him alone, he will pick out his steps as daintily as possible and bring you to the journey's end without a false step! At that time there was a patch of jungle on the very top of the hill through which the path ran: before going through which it was well worth while to sit down on a big stone and see all the magnificent scenery below, bathed in the full moonlight. We shall never forget the grandeur of the mountain scenery in many parts of the Central Province, and have often told our friends in the old country not to talk to us about scenery after what we had seen. But they would not believe it. As we get well through the path in the forest, and just before coming out, into upper clearing, we see something right in front, a huge black rock: can it be, we have missed the path? No, that is impossible, there is only one path and a wall of dense forest on each side, we knew the path well and are quite confident, no black rock or rock of any sort stands here. Just then the huge black rock commences to move! And we now know very well what it is, but in case some of our readers may not we may just remark it was a wild elephant. The cold sweet bursts out from every pore. Here we were in a narrow jungle path at midnight, not two feet broad with thick nilu jungle almost meeting, and a few feet in front of us a wild elephant. What if he should make a dash down on the disturber of his midnight rambles, and finish our life, as our holidays were done. What if—crash, crackle, crash, stones come tumbling down in great numbers. We don't even try to escape, we are done for, put our hands over our face, and crouch in to the side jungle. Crash crack—it does not seem so loud; we venture to look up, and the elephant is gone up the path, and away—instead of down. Slowly, carefully, and with as little noise as possible we crawl up the path in the wake of the elephant. On approaching where it opens out into coffee, all seems clear space, nothing obstructs the beams of the moonlight. We peer cautiously round the corner of the jungle, but nothing is to be seen, a breath of relief is drawn, and we proceed on our way, but, before going far, the elephant is overtaken; walking leisurely along in advance! Here have we been, instead of running away from an elephant, as was supposed, actually pursuing him: not only this, but overtaken him! But we are at home now, and know every inch of the ground, being close up to where another road branches off, and, whichever the elephant chooses, of course we pursue the other. The

DOORS LOCKED.

branch road is passed, our enemy goes straight on, bound for a large swamp, where no doubt he will have some good feeding, down a steep declivity. We make a rush and a run, on to the branching off road and off at full speed, and so was the elephant! He had heard us, and we were both running off from each other, in opposite directions, as hard as we could, with this difference, that the elephant was grunting with fear and alarm, and we were grunting for want of breath, for it did, and no mistake, create a tax on one's breathing, walking up that hill, and instead of getting the usual rest at the top, of fifteen minutes, a fresh demand was made upon the lungs in running away from an elephant.

By the time we reached our bungalow, we were quite calmed down, and as the ricketty old building popped into view we felt thankful, that all the holiday excursions were done, our troubles at an end. But they were not. We sat down on a chair in the verandah to rest, knowing it would be quite useless to call for anything to eat and drink, for the answer would assuredly be "Nothing got," and having a very good notion that we would not be long of sleeping in, fine cold climate and having also some idea of taking the coolies by surprise and seeing how morning muster has been managed, as to turning out time, when master is supposed to be away, and being firmly convinced that this cannot be managed if the boy knows master has come, why we will circumvent the boy, turn in and salute his astonished ears at daybreak next morning, when all the fires are out, with "Boy, bring coffee!" We chuckle, and are quite amused at the idea, put our hand on the door-handle, but the door is locked in the inside, or else some one has the key, for there is no key in the door, the windows are tried, all the same, locked out of our own bungalow, at midnight, and so, of course, all our knowing designs frustrated. Now we have always had a most decided objection to having our designs frustrated, and when obstacles were opposed to designs the more determined we become. A very good speciality, provided only you are right—but not a safe one, should one happen to be wrong. Well, there could be no question about right or wrong here, for no one can possibly dispute, that a man must of course be right in getting into his own bungalow, and, if no other means will do, even in breaking in. We suddenly recollected that the small window in the back writing-room off the bed-room has no bolt at all, but that the rough unplanned plank window, which swings on two leather hinges, is just fastened

A MIDNIGHT ENCOUNTER.

inside, by two nails and a string. Getting round to this hole, or window, a push is given; it gives way about an inch, and will move no further, it is tied tight inside with a piece of string. Foiled again! After some consideration, we proceed to a corner of the verandah, where a lot of tools are lying, and get hold of an old catti; this is inserted into the opening of about an inch wide, and, after a good deal of sawing and tearing, the string is cut, the window flies open, and we jump in, mentally exclaiming, "Well, our troubles are over now," but they are not. The moonbeams stream into the room through the open window, and sitting down on a solitary chair (we forget, whether or not it had only three legs, or if the back was broken, for it must have been either of these) commence to undress: this does not take long, we pop into bed, but there it is some one in possession, there can be no mistake about it, our bed is occupied! We put out our hand along the pillow, and it comes into contact with a bushy head of hair; the hand is passed down over the face, and passes over a good strong beard; just then the moon throws a bright beam into the room through the open hole, which rests on the head of the bed, revealing to our astonished and indignant gaze, the well-known features of the boy—yes, the boy—our worthy servant, calmly and peacefully asleep in master's bed, with, of course, master's blankets, sheets and pillows. We give him a shake, but he only gives a moan, and pulls the blanket over his head. We seize hold of his feet and pull him forcibly out of bed, upon which he frantically shouts out "*Kallan, Kallan,*" (thieves, thieves). But our choler is now up. What insult to injury! Shut out of our bungalow, our very bed taken possession of, and when we eject the invader are called a thief by our own servant! We pull the harder. "A nice boy you are to call your master a thief. We wonder who is the thief." The boy catches hold of one of the bed-posts, down we both tumble on the mud floor, and the bed on top of us. The boy now changes his shout and cries out "Murder," upon which we shake him up again, and assure him that we have not the most remote intention of murdering him, but that, when all the circumstances of this case are investigated, we will not promise the same assurance or immunity from a good licking, which, from present general aspect of affairs, we are under a firm conviction he most assuredly deserves. But the boy assures master, this is the very first night he has slept in his bed (? !), he goes down on his knees and swears it, and it was

A DIRTY "BOY."

all owing to his going to give out the sheets and blankets to wash to-morrow. We tell him to rise up from committing perjury, and as there are no clean sheets to get that spare blanket out of the almirah and make up a bed on the couch. The next morning our bed passes under a searching examination, and the result is, that it is our belief no washerman can ever possibly clean those sheets, blankets and pillow-cases, they are so dirty, and so thoroughly impregnated with oil and filth. The boy is asked when he went to bed the night before, and he replies at 10 o'clock. Now we have caught him, we say; we arrived shortly after midnight, and is it possible that the bedding could have got into this filthy state all in two hours. But you will never put out or shut up a boy. He quickly responded, it must be, because he was very, unusually dirty, not having bathed or washed, as he intended that very morning to commence and thoroughly clean all the bungalow. "And no more than need," say we, "for such a dirty house I never saw." "Where ignorance is bliss't is folly to be wise." After this exploit, we always avoided, after an absence, coming unexpectedly home. It answers no good purpose, quite the reverse; we all know the lax and careless condition of servants in general, when master is away then, why should the master be put to inconvenience and discomfort on this account, when he can have everything comfortable, clean, and in the usual way, by telling when, he is to be back, or if we could not always do this, we generally sent on the box cooly, or horsekeeper in advance to say master was coming. The result was, we were expected, and stepped into a clean home. We even preserved such a lively recollection of the last midnight adventure, in being locked out of our bungalow, that, on any subsequent midnight arrivals, we all always announced our arrival, in very plain terms, which would admit of no manner of doubt, and of course never *saw* any further repetitions of what has been described. But sometimes even these plain announcements would meet with no response. The boy had gone down to spend the night at the lines, and had locked up the house and taken away the key. There was always some trouble and inconvenience. So we took all the keys, and locked them up, stating that now it was impossible to lock the bungalow, and that, if it was locked up, it must be by the inside bolts, which course said as plain as could be that that some one was inside, and therefore, by knocking, admission would be obtained. This did not suit the boy's

arrangements at all, he represented he could not be always watching, he must eat sometimes, and he must sleep a little, "only a very little, and it was very little he slept in master's service, so little that he had become quite thin, just look," and he stretched out his bare arm. But we are obdurate. "Well; well, whoever breaks into our bungalow, will be a fool for his pains. Boy what is there to steal?" "Why," says the boy, "all master's things. The blue finger glass, the tea-cup full of sugar, the cracked water goglet, and tumbler, and—and," here the boy became puzzled, for even he could not conceive it probable for any one to steal a table, a chair, and a couch, or a bed, and there was nothing else.

Now we by no means intend to depreciate, or hold in small esteem, holidays. They are not only needful, but necessary, but we do insist that some method and system is advisable, some arrangement, before wildly plunging off for a holiday trip. These planters who are resident in a cool climate, we think, we have personally experienced it—would be benefited by a temporary trip to a warm one and sea air, where they would have a complete change of air, life, habits, food, a change of everything. Where is the use of wearing oneself out scampering about the coffee estates and coming home from your holidays quite used up, and worse than if you had no holiday at all? True, you see other methods and systems in your calling, hear the opinions and experiences of others, all which is very necessary, but it is neither necessary nor expedient to spend the whole of your holidays at this sort of thing, which would make it no holiday time at all. It is too much the case, wherever the planter goes, all the talk is "shop"—coffee, coolies, crops, until the old planter almost mechanically lapses into an old pulper, and can talk about nothing else, at all events cares about talking of nothing else. There can be no doubt a change for a few weeks, from a cold wet climate to a hot dry one, is very beneficial, and also, on returning to the cold one, you also receive increased benefit from it. On the other hand, those who are resident in low warm districts, on the same reasoning, *per contra*, should visit a cold climate, which they can always have, at Nuwara Eliya one of its greatest benefits which it offers to the planting visitor is that there is no coffee there.* Here you have a change: actually no coffee to be seen, and if you take

* But plenty of tea and cinchona, while coffee is no far off.—ED.

STORIES ABOUT "COFFEE."

care and don't speak about your coffee, so much the better. If any of your planting fellows find you out and commence in the usual way, just tell them—one word for them, and two for yourself—to shut up and not mention the subject. After ten days, or a fortnight, you will return better than if you had been travelling a month in the coffee districts and had long disputes every evening upon the comparative merits of different systems of weeding, pruning, manuring. For there can be no doubt the great drawback upon the planter's holiday is, his difficulty in getting rid altogether of the subject of coffee, because what more natural than that he should go and visit his friends, these friends, as a rule, being planters also resident on some estate? Thus he can't get away from coffee, he must hear all about it, and see it too. In fact we question very much, go where the planter will, if he can ever utterly for the time being quite ignore, his calling. For casual acquaintances will say "Here is a planter, he must know all about coffee." Visitors at Nuwara Eliya, from Colombo, will tackle him about blossoms, crops, estimates, coolies, and what not, go where the planter will, he will be assailed by every one, or some, for some information or talk, on the all important subject. Even in the old country, one is not free from it: "A coffee planter," "Immensely rich you know," "All planters are," "Tell us all about coffee." The planter is very happy, quite polite, and goes on giving some of the required information, when he is suddenly told to shut up and tell no stories. "What, coffee beans growing inside a red pulp, and that pulp growing in clusters on a tree! Now we all know very well it is a bean, and every one knows beans are sown annually, and, after yielding their crops, the stalks are just pulled up and thrown away. Now tell us truly, how often do you sow your beans? Once or twice a year? And do you give the coolies say scythes or sickles to cut the crops?" Our loquacious and intelligent friend without pausing for a reply rattles on. "What sort of threshing machines and beans have you got? And what do you do with the coffee bean straw?" We can't stand this any longer and assure her that there is no such a thing as coffee straw, and that we are not joking. What has been said is a fact. "Well, well," was the reply, "how very wonderful. But who would have thought it?" and she looks doubtfully and suspiciously, upon which we cannot contain a smile. The smile awakes all the former suspicions. "Oh, oh! you thought I believed you. Beans—whoever heard of beans growing on trees. Not such a fool as you think." And thus it is the difficulty the planter finds, go

THE PAST AND THE FUTURE.

where he will, in shelving coffee on the coffee estates, he must enter into disputes and arguments to uphold his own views and practical experiences in many general matters. At home, or rather in the old country, should it not to be his home, he is led into all manner of minute details by his acquaintances, desirous of information or very likely just for a topic of conversation, or to keep the company alive and brisk. And then, if not directly told that he is 'drawing a long bow' it is very easy to be seen that they are of such an opinion: incredulous looks and smiles, shakes of the head, a turn of the eye, which just plainly says "Not so green as you think." Now, all this is very vexatious, when one is doing their best to give information, to see, to feel plainly, that the information is not believed. No, no; the less one speaks about 'shop' the better, or, better still, say nothing at all when off on your holidays, wheresoever that may be. If questioned about it in the old country, say as little as possible (of course you can judge of exceptional cases), we mean generally, for depend upon it the topic is broached in nine cases out of ten, not for the sake of information, but merely for conversation's sake to have something to say. And of course when talk slackens and a subject is wanting you can never fail by tackling a man for information on the subject of his calling. Then when you wax warm on the subject and commence a series of minute details, you will suddenly be arrested by a yawn, the listless eye, or "Dear me, but I did not hear your last remark." Time now to shut up; shut up and commence the details of some recent scandal, or some astonishing new dresses, and mark how the eye will brighten up; you have found your cue now, and thank you, no more coffee, it feels *heavy*.

We are told, such changes have taken place in the country within the last few years, that, if we were to revisit the land where we have sojourned so long, we should hardly know it, and that the manners and customs of the people have also undergone a similar change. If such a great change, such a rapid step forward, has taken place in a brief period of time, our young friends may take into consideration the changes that have taken place in these respects during thirty years. To those who have sojourned a long time in the country, these changes come on so gradually, that they are scarcely aware of them, unless they look back and compare them with the days that are gone. But let one who has been absent say only half-a-dozen years return, and he will no doubt find planting life and Ceylon generally all turned upside down, and totally different from his former experiences.

CONTENTMENT.

We don't often quote poetry, but cannot refrain from giving a few lines which we take out of an old paper being struck with it as somewhat appropriate to the Coffee Districts, as shewing forth the first and feeling sentiments of some young immigrant "thirty years ago—."

Gude preserve us; sic a country !
Naething here but sticks and trees,
Swarms of bugs and vile mosquitoes,
Every kind of biting fleas.

Oh ! that I were back to Britain !
Friends nor foes would tempt me more
E'er again to set a foot on
This uncultivated shor'.

Yes, rather would I be contend with
Meaner things, and sober cheer.
Wi' friends at home, than spend a life-time
In this wilderness, oot here.

We have some recollection of the big Ceylon officials, stating in some despatch relative to some discussion anent the railway question, before the Colombo and Kandy line was determined on, that coffee was not a permanent industry, and what was the use of spending large sums of money on any work, such as a railway, when, before many years were past, it would probably lapse into a howling wilderness, and what use would a line of railway be through and to a howling wilderness? But we see no signs of this yet, quite the contrary, for the whole history and progress of the planting enterprise has steadily, slowly and surely (with a few occasional checks from which it always recovered with a rebound) been to emerge from a "howling wilderness," making sure progress and advance, in spite of the *howls* of all those who lived in a *wilderness of weeds*, which had destroyed their coffee. Well might they howl, for their own estates had lapsed into a 'howling wilderness,' beyond all possibility of redemption. But that was not the fault of coffee. It was the fault of its master, or cultivation, or it may be a bad selection in a bad district. But did one ever know a planter who had not something to "howl" over? Ever know a contented planter? Contentment is the true "philosophers' stone." Very likely, for nobody has ever found the one or the other. As life advances, and you get contented with one subject of discontent, before very long another source of trouble will break out. Have you found it so? Such has been the experience of

P. D. MILLIE.

THIRTY YEARS AGO.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

CONDUCTORS AND THEIR WIVES.

"Master want a conductor? a very good conductor?" were the sounds that struck the ear, as one afternoon we lounged on the long arm chair, after work was over, in a dreary nonentity of thought, very probably smoking, and looking over the columns of the *Colombo Observer*. On looking up, a man is standing a little way off behind, with his hat off, and generally in a very respectful position. He was a man "of colour," but dressed in every respect European fashion, except that he had no stockings!; his shoes were very large, did not fit him, and evidently had been made for some one else; an old soft felt hat was in his hands, and he kept twisting it up, rolling it round and round, until it had all the appearance of a piece of thick rope. He seemed anxious and nervous as he repeated "master want a very good conductor": we reply, we are in want of a conductor, but judging from past experiences are of opinion it is quite impossible to procure a good one, and much more so, a very good one. "Yes sir" was the prompt reply. "But master won't say that any more; if master try me—Take me." Well you seem to have a good opinion of yourself at all events, and we have generally found such people possess very little of the good opinion of others, and very often much worse than those who were of a more humble turn of mind. But the conductor says, "beg pardon sir, but Europe people not understand our way"—"now, I have had a great many wives,"—we interrupt him, with, that will do, go away, we wish no further consideration with you, get along with you. He persists—"just excuse me sir, it was not my fault, the wives all turned out very badly, they could not and would not boil rice or make any good curry—and they were always buying jewels and ornaments, which I had to pay for, until at last I said no more wives, and got a coolie boy to cook my food, and keep the house clean, and felt very happy indeed for a few months. At last I began to feel lonely but was afraid to think any more about another wife, when one day a very stout Tamil girl comes into my verandah and wishes to be taken on the roll to work; she wore a red jacket with short half sleeves, and had an immense quantity of white cloth coiled round her

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body, all fastened in behind which caused over that part of the body, a very large protuberance, she had rings in her nose, her ears, and on her toes—she wore heavy anklets and bracelets and round her neck were an immense number of necklaces, she was very gay and talkative, and said ‘Conductor why don’t you take a wife, you lonely man?’—after saying this she must have felt she had been rather bold and rash—for she immediately turned round her back to me, and covered up her head with the cloth; she then turned half round, lowered the cloth from her forehead and squinted at me, with one eye; she then turned full round and still keeping the cloth over the whole of the face, just allowed two bright twinkling eyes to be seen over the top of it, she then laughed and ran off round the corner of the verandah, and I, just to see what she was doing, went and looked round the corner after her, but she had now recovered her self-possession and modesty—which her rash speech had somewhat upset—she walked gravely up and commenced on the subject of being taken on to work on the estate. But, I say, ‘I must first answer your question, ‘There are no good wives to be got, I have tried ever so many, and every succeeding one declared herself infinitely superior to her predecessor, in fact quite a model wife altogether, and so I was led on, but the fact was the more wives I tried the worse they were, and the last one was so very bad that I exclaimed my first one was bad enough, but compared to this one, she was a perfect angel—oh! that I had never sent away my first wife!—and so I advise all my conductor friends who grumble about their wives, don’t send away or allow to go away your first wife for she will be your best.’ The Tamil girl is looking steadfastly on the ground, she says “very bad people, but all people are not bad.” She picks up some straws off the verandah, leans against the post and commences busily to tear all the straws into very small pieces, when this is done she commences making holes in the verandah with her toes, and then with her toes fill them up again. I now tell her the name is entered and she can go, and tell her the room in the lines she is to have amongst some other women. But instead of going she pulls some straws out of the thatched roof and commences to twist them round her fingers, in the form of rings and says “Poor Conductor, can’t get any good wife, poor man, take me,” immediately the words were out of her mouth she plumps down on the verandah, sitting on her ‘hind legs,’ buries her face in her lap, and draws the white cloth all over her head and all, and just looked like as if a bag of coffee had been placed there, and the table cloth thrown over it; there she sits not a motion made.

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After a short time I go and sit down beside her, put one arm round the bag of coffee, with the table cloth thrown over it and say—‘I will take you.’ Moans and sobs now burst from beneath the white cloth, and promise, oh promise, you will never beat me, always give me plenty of rice curry—and not send me out to work, and give me a silk cloth first pay day—here the moaning and crying become very painful but when I say I promise, it will be done, a merry laugh bursts from under the cloth, the cloth and its wearer become all animation, and she playfully strokes my black beard, saying ‘give me that silk cloth now, just give me a letter to the bazaar man and I will go and choose one myself,’ and thus it happened that the girl that said ‘Take me’ became my wife.” “Well we ask, what was the ultimate result of this most extraordinary courtship and marriage,” for we have become quite interested in your family matters, although we cannot see what that it has to do with your present request.” “Excuse me sir,” says the man respectfully, “it has everything to do with it. The best wife I ever had, and I have her still, and hope ever will, said ‘Take me’—Now it is not customary for Europeans even to think of such a state of matters, so far as actual speech is concerned, but sir, beg pardon sir, women can speak without speaking, a cast of the eye, a turn of the head, a twist of the mouth, or what not, may say just as plain as speech, and perhaps much plainer, ‘Take me’—and the men are so dull, owing I suppose to your wretched damp foggy climate that they don’t, can’t, or won’t see it—and then they go grumbling about that the women are also uppish, and my lady this and my lady that, that there is no getting a confidential word with them at all, while all the time they are just saying in silent polite language ‘Take me’; with us uncultivated uncivilized people, when actions are not understood, hints not taken, the women as a last resource and just in very compassion for such a very stupid ignoramus of a man, say—‘Take me’—and those who say so make the best wives; their character is at stake, and a woman’s character is much more precious to her, than a man’s is to him. For would it not be cast up to her, if she turned out a bad wife, how she deceived the man, and said, ‘take me.’ The mere fact of her having said this, will be a strong inducement, the very strongest, to try and be a good wife; whereas, when the man says to the woman, will you take me, she is not held morally responsible in any way, for any after results, if she merely says, yes, ‘You asked me, and I said yes,’ you took me for better or for worse,’ and now you are kicking up no end of a row, simply because, without your knowledge

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or consent, I have bought a new dress, which of course you have got to pay for. But when the woman says 'Take me,' depend upon it, she will strive to make herself worthy of her offer, so that it might not be cast upon her afterwards, you said take me, and deceived me."

Well, well, but what has this got to do with the subject; what a very extraordinary man. "I see you are tired sir. But you will recollect I said 'take me,' as a conductor, and I hope, if you do me the favour to engage my services, you will find I will do my best to uphold my own recommendation; that is just what I was trying to practically explain." We now say, "very good, but how long have you had this wife, that said, 'Take me' who made use of such plainness of speech, and, indeed, for a woman, very indelicate speech." "Indelicate speech," not so sir, he replied, *we* say yes or no, and there is an end of it, while all you European people go on with what you call flirtatious, the woman, by her actions and demeanour just as plain as possible saying 'Take me.' The man by encouraging her, on his part, indirectly insinuates, yes, I will take you, but he never does, and the lady being always in expectation of these two little words being softly whispered into her ear, which being long of forthcoming, she tries to draw them out by many charming blandishments in her manner; if unsuccessful, he does not promise these fascinating words, she feels herself very ill-used, and as if her affections had been trifled with. Now, if instead of going on in this way for months, and even years, without any certainty on either side, that either really meant anything," beyond a temporary amusement, or if the woman suspected the man who was backward and bashful, as really a great number are, however bold and headstrong they may be in ordinary matters of life, would it not be much better for the woman to say plump and plain on some fitting opportunity, not perhaps 'Take me,' but just something milder. "Do you intend, wish or incline, to take me, if not the sooner this silly nonsense is ended the better." "Very plain sense, and very practically and reasonably expressed; we reply, but the whole argument may very briefly be concluded by calling in the aid of a never-failing, and infallible authority, against which there is no appeal, and that authority is, 'It is not the custom.'" "Well" says he, "and yet you always tell us our customs are bad, and we should change them, and are very angry when we reply to any of your proposals, which we very often do, by saying, 'it is not our custom,' but we see, it is just the same with you. We can make no reply, we feel there is some truth in which the man says. So as many

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better men have done, we think the subject, over, and say or rather repeat. How long have you had this wife? "A long time sir," says he, "a very long time nearly two months." We reply, this is not a sufficient time to judge, wait for another month and after the lapse of three, or three and a half, we will question him further on his domestic felicity, and in order not to forget, make a memo, in advance, in our Diary.

But as this discussion upon wives has little to do with the subject of your visit, what are your practical qualifications, as a conductor? He replies, can speak Tamil Sinhalese, read and write English, and "do up" the check roll. All very necessary abilities, we reply, but still, any common clerk can do that, are you aware now, that the office of conductor is not such an easy and simple one, as is often supposed by your class of people? You seem to think without any exception, that nothing else is expected, or required from them. Now the post is a very important one in this way. A conductor has a very trying position, because while he must endeavour to find favour with the coolies, so also, must he try to please the master. The coolies endeavour to do as little work as possible for the greatest amount of possible pay. While the master's interest is quite the reverse. He must get as much work as possible out of the men, at a fair rate of pay, and as much as possible keep down, any "strikes for a rise." In fact just "a fair day's work for a fair day's pay." While the coolie, if he had his will would go in for no work at all, and for a very high rate of pay. Now what we consider one of the most necessary qualifications in a conductor, is to reconcile and modify these contending interests, so as to please and do justice to both parties. It requires a good deal of tact and management, which is very often little thought of. Now, do you consider you possess this tact, so as to manage and adjust with satisfaction to both parties, two conflicting interests? The man twisted and untwisted the hat in his hand, and said "Yes sir, can calculate interest, "Conflick interest" can do, "but master must give me a Ready Reckoner.—Now we are always very careful not to laugh in the presence of natives, but we are mortal, and what mortal could repress a smile at this absurd mistake; the conductor sees the smile, and is quite ignorant of its cause. He says, ready reckoner quite cheap, can get for two shillings or less, all estates supply them, but if master not like, master buy one, and stop it off my pay.—We again take some trouble in explaining the meaning of conflicting interests, and after a good deal of general small talk on various matters, the conductor is engaged, and installed in office. A few weeks after this event,

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the conductor's wife comes rushing into our verandah in a very wild state of excitement, she plumps down on the ground, covers her head over with her cloth, and commences to sob, as if her head was quite full of tears and contained nothing else, but we have very grave and just suspicion that there is more than tears, a good deal, in that lady's brain. Nevertheless we feel quite distressed for we had a weakness, and still have, and suppose most men are the same in being easily moved by a woman weeping, which most of them seem quite aware of. As they generally resorted to this resource, when all other methods were unavailing of having their petitions attended to, and the result invariably was, they were attended to, and decided in their favour. Then what a pleasant reward it was, to see the tears so speedily dried up, and the grateful glances from the bright eyes beaming upon us, fresh and glistening, like the sun beaming forth his rays from behind the dark rain cloud! On the spur of the moment our hand was stretched forth to raise up the distressed damsel and inquire into the cause of her sorrow, but was suddenly drawn back, it just struck us that here was this woman, in exactly the same position as described by the conductor, when she softened his heart, put he his arms round her, and said, "I will take you." Could it be possible that the same trap in which the conductor had been caught, was now set for the master!—We draw back, and gravely tell her to go home, if she will not tell the subject of her distress, but she just buries her head in her lap, rocks to and fro, and says nothing. It is now four o'clock, and bands of coolies are passing the bungalow, on their way home from work. Of course they all look well into the verandah; for no coolie, or coolies, ever can, or do, pass the house without doing that. They immediately turn away their heads, as if they had seen nothing, or at all events seen something, which they ought not to have seen, or which was not intended for them to see. We have previously remarked, coolies have a great deal of natural courtesy and politeness, which many of their betters are utterly devoid of, but still, as they passed, we could not help remarking that they talked in a low tone of voice, one to the other, a few even looked back, over their shoulders, and what was stranger still, laughed, yes actually laughed. The conductor himself would soon be here to render his account of the day's work, and—this sort of thing cannot be tolerated, so, we call loudly out, "Boy," the boy very speedily responded, for although the kitchen door was half shut, yet he and the kitchen coolie had been watching the whole of the proceedings from behind the door, peering through the chink, at the back, "Boy come here, and bring the kitchen coolie. '*Adjeer*,'" was the immediate

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shout. Now, take hold of that woman, both of you, and take her away home. The woman started up, drew herself up to her full height, her eyes flashed fire, as she exclaimed, "touch me, Pariahs, if you dare," "you dare not touch a woman of the vellale caste," The boys hung back, for they knew there was truth in the remark, and if they did, there would be a great disturbance about it. But we were firm, you must obey master's orders, it is her own fault, if she will not go away, you must lay hold of her. The boys again advanced, and the woman screamed out, and caught hold of one of the verandah posts, to which she clung like a cat, then the boys caught hold of her, pulled away at her, and she pulled at the post. Now the bungalow was in rather a ricketty state, as most bungalows were in these times, the verandah posts although seemingly quite sound were rotten at the bottom, just where the earth touches them, they will stand a long time in this state if quite perpendicular the weight and pressure of the roof being straight upon them. But this very unusual and sudden attack upon the rotten post, proved more than it could bear. It gave way suddenly and it, the woman, and the two boys were precipitated into the verahdah, where they all lay in a heap, the woman shrieking, the boys laughing, and the post lying, as if nothing had happened, and just at this time, at this very absurd crisis, in steps the conductor! Just imagine his look of amazement, distress, and indignation, all combined, the woman gets up; recognises her worthy spouse, and is fit for the trying occasion, she makes a rush towards him, clasps her arms round his neck, buries her face in his breast, and sobs violently—"save me oh, save me from that dreadful master"! just come in time, you saw his servants violently assault me to take me inside but I resisted; you saw me resist, yes, you know I am an ill used and virtuous woman "appa appa-a." The conductor strokes her long dishevelled hair, hanging over her back, and reaching nearly to the ground, he puts his other arm round her waist and says "come away," After the lapse of an hour or so, we call up the conductor to the bungalow, tell and explain to him, the whole facts, and circumstances of the case. He listens attentively and politely, says nothing and goes away and we are perfectly certain, he does not believe a word of the explanation, but of course, he never would presume to say so. He is not singular, at all there may be exceptions. But as a rule most orientals are the same, that is to say if they have faith and confidence in the woman, and why should they not, it may be inquired, discretion is necessary, in this, as in all matters. For it is a fact that all tattle gossip and light news is almost invariably

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true, and it may proceed from this cause, that the women having no occupation whatever devote almost their whole spare time, and often the time that belongs to the master too, to the receiving of and relating light general news. Thus the husband, coming home from his work is treated to all the news of the day however trifling and silly, and he always finds every thing is true. Having thus always been accustomed to receive truthful reports of all events from his spouse, it never enters into his mind to doubt her word, he does not and perhaps cannot reason that in private personal matters of great importance to the woman, in order to answer any purpose whatever, she may take advantage of her general character for truthfulness, where truth or falsehood did not at all concern her personally. Presuming upon this, she might, and doubtless often does, pass off a lie in order to gain some private end. Be this as it may, as a rule, the husband always places implicit reliance on the statements of his wife, so much so, that on his word being doubted, as to any special statement, he will clinch the truth of it by saying, "my wife told me." Of course there are, at times occasional exceptions, we refer only especially to the happy couple, who live happily together, the knowledge of the woman on all general subjects, is tolerably correct, because, small talk and gossip, is the way in which they spend their time, the master being the principal on the estate, every thing he does, however trifling and unimportant is news. It will be told to the coolie, by his wife, the time he is eating his rice, and she is sitting, looking on, how master passed by the lines, and looked in. Then, he went up to the top of that hill, looked at the weeders, and called back Carpen, for doing careless work, and how he made him do it over again, then he came down, and went round the hill, close to the river, where he disappeared for a long time, and then, just to see what he could be about, she went a little way out, pretending to gather fire-wood, and there was master sitting on a big stone, at the edge of the river, quite naked, he had been bathing, he was drying himself with his coat, which he afterwards spread out on a big rock to dry in the sun, before putting it on again, and another woman told her, that after master went to the bungalow, he had some coffee, for just as she was passing, didn't she see the boy, coming out of the kitchen with the coffee pot, and a cup, and then the next that passed by said, master was sitting in the verandah smoking, he would not go out to work again to-day, for it was past three o'clock, she was quite sure, for as she passed, she heard the bungalow clock strike, and just to be quite certain she hailed the boy, who was always very

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polite to the women who passed by the bungalow road, and she said appoo-ayah-what o'clock is that struck, he went and looked, and replied, three; no, no, master was not coming out again to-day. After this question was settled, some previously understood communication took place between some of the women in the lines, and a working party not far off. The result of which was, that most of the working party sat down, and those who did not, did no more work.

By and bye coolies were seen singly leaving the working place, and making for the lines by a quiet circuitous route, into which they entered, and did not come out again. The women knew all about this also, but they never spoke about it, and if master was suspicious and questioned the ladies, they would declare they saw no one come to the lines from the working place, which statement doubtless was perfectly true and correct, but for all that, they knew well all about it, because it was they who gave the signal, "Master housed."

Gossiping and small talk amongst servants and subordinates about the habits and doings of their superiors in position, or masters, is just human nature, and so, is just the same in every country and clime, the coolies are not singular in this respect, it is just the same way amongst employers and employed, in the old country, with perhaps this difference, that in the old country there is more privacy of life, but still, perhaps not so much as is thought; also, inferiors in station and position, have minds considerably above the status of the Tamil, and thus while indulging in their gossip about the master, it is very probably not so harmless, or innocent and superficial.

Besides, it must be remembered, that master on a coffee estate, is just a small king on a small kingdom, except when he gets the sack, which shews to the astonished coolies, that there is some hidden power more supreme still. But even this may sometimes be doubted. For the master when reduced to this pass, always told the coolies he was going away of his own free will, that he could not stop any longer on this mean shabby estate. He was going to look out for a situation where his abilities would be appreciated. The coolies would then say, Master was wise, and they were all going too. For if master's abilities were not appreciated and understood, neither were theirs, how could they? Master would feel that he was appreciated now, these coolies were knowing fellows, but, as in duty bound, he would impress upon them the necessity of remaining where they were, but they said they would not, no, not a single day after master went. So when the time came, when master departed, of course they were all very sorry, and came

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running after him in troops, as he left the estate, saying they were all coming after him next pay day, on the first situation he got, they did not care where or in what district it was. "Master was our master wherever he was;" Master's successor hearing the coolies were all going away after his predecessor, the very first opportunity, brings a good batch of coolies with him, and also takes a great deal of trouble in securing otherwise as full a supply of labour as possible, and he congratulates himself on having taken this step, because go where he will, and every afternoon when work is over, the sound is dinned into his ears *Shimiky Pora* (going away to country). He gets so irritated and annoyed by this continual pest, that knowing his works are all well through and he is rather full handed, he procures money, calls the people who were always giving notice to leave, pays them up and off and tells them to be off sharp, as he wants their lines for more men who are engaged and coming. But the next day, they come up to the bungalow, and all say they were foolish. "There is no master like our master, they are not going. Where can they go to." He orders them off; it was their own desire, they prostrate themselves at full length in the verandah. "Master can give them no pay at all," "master can beat them; master can cut their throats; only don't send them away." The writer has frequently come through these and similar experiences, which in our present times of difficult labour supply, and coolie independence, will be difficult to imagine. In fact, we perfectly recollect, the great swing we had once over the coolies, was the threat of paying them up and turning them off. But we should think, better not try that little game now! The secret was that the coolies supposing they were people of very great importance, as indeed they were, but not so much so then, as now, because at that period, they could easily, or with little trouble, be replaced, thought to frighten and coerce the master, by giving notice to leave, while at the same time they had no such intention, and if their notice was acted upon, very great indifference shewn on the subject, they would be very much disappointed! We once most effectually put a stop to this pest of giving notice to leave, by promptly accepting it, and procuring another full and sufficient labour supply. When the people were all paid up, and off according to notice, after a few days, it was the old story. Three-fourths of them were not going away at all. We pointed out their place was filled up by others on the distinct understanding according to their own wish, that they were going away, and really a double labour force could not be kept on; their services would be required during crop,

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but it still wanted three months of the time before that period would arrive. The reply was, keep us; don't send us away, we will work half time, or for our rice until crop season arrives. Here was a case in which they had regularly done for themselves, because in the usual course of events, it would have been the new arrivals who would have been taken on, to work short time or for their rice, but the old hands having given notice to leave, and that notice having been accepted, were old hands no longer, but had placed themselves exactly in the position of new by their own act, and so had no reason to complain of the consequences of their own actions.

By this sharp practice and decided course of action which was fully acted up to, notwithstanding many petitions and remonstrances from the Kanganies, who thought master was only a little angry, by and bye he would give in after having frightened the people, but when they found master did not give in, that he kept to his word, their care of and respect for the master was greatly increased. There were no more false notices to leave, the tables were turned, master had a powerful lever in his hands, and knew how to use it, the lever was this:—"If you don't behave yourselves, if you don't do proper work, at the end of the month, I will discharge you." The news would spread "Master is angry, is going to pay us off. This won't do, we must please and propitiate the master." That evening the conductor and kanganies would be nearly an hour later of coming to the bungalow; the kanganie, shaking his long stick would valiantly exclaim, He had punished the men for their insolence, for they had all cut four or five holes more than the appointed task and then he would wrathfully abuse all their relations at a great rate, especially their mothers and sisters.

One day, after breakfast, the Conductor approached the bungalow, at a very rapid rate; while wondering if anything could be wrong, to bring the men at this unusual time, he hurriedly stepped into the verandah, very much excited, walking boldly up to where we were sitting, all his usual respectful manner gone, he did not even remove his hat from his head, and burst forth with the exclamation, in a very loud tone of voice, "Master know where my wife is?" We felt very much irritated at his unusual insolent demeanour, and told him very sharply, we knew nothing about that lively, troublesome lady, neither did we wish to know; to go away to his work, and if this troublesome behaviour was repeated, we would be under the necessity of dispensing with his services. This threat seemed suddenly to cool him down, and he briefly explained, he had heard his wife, who had

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been a-missing for the last two days, was concealed in the jungle! 'Who had hid her there?' and he looked sternly at master! it was quite evident the man was jealous. Now when the green-eyed monster possesses a man, it is no use at all attempting to reason matters or explain anything. One may say or swear anything, but the jealous man will never believe you; in fact, it may be, that just when you have considered, you have given such ample proof of your innocence as to admit of no manner of doubt, the jealous man goes away more thoroughly impressed than ever he was, of your guilt! Before the day was over, the report had spread all over the estate, "That Master had hid the Conductor's wife in the jungle." What a nice bit of scandal and gossip for the coolies; such a piece of news had not occurred for many a day. But this was not all, for was it not also, all duly reported, how, when the Conductor went to the bungalow to inquire about his runaway wife, he was in danger of being beaten, and was threatened with his discharge, and besides a great many other silly reports were rife, so that it became quite evident some decisive investigation was necessary, in order to clear the master's character, and resume good discipline, peace, and order on the estate. It was rather a trying position for the master, because it presented the altogether unusual one, of the supposed culprit, or the accused, having also to assume the position of judge and jury! The Master, after full consideration, came to the conclusion, that where there is plenty of smoke, there must be some fire, and the first thing to be done, was to find out the original cause of the rumour, that the conductor's wife was hid in the jungle, and the report was found to be this. One of the junior kanganies, was observed, whenever *he* thought he was not observed, to disappear into the jungle, taking with him, a quantity of rice tied up in a cloth, and a small tin case of curry. Now the kangani himself before doing this, always ate his own rice, so that this supply must be for some one in the jungle, who wished to be secret, and as there was nobody else missing from the estate, it was surmised, and said, that the Conductor's wife was hidden in the jungle, the master now, has got his cue, some thing to work upon, and secret orders are given to watch and mark well the spot, where this very mysterious kanganie enters the jungle. This in due course is done, and all reported to master. There can be no doubt about it, he always enters, just close where that tall keena tree stands, with the yellow back. The next day, after all the coolies are settled at work, Master calls the conductor, to come

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on an exploring expedition, to solve the mystery. They arrive at the tall keena tree, on the edge of the jungle, and see amongst the soft "nilloo" underwood, a well-beaten path; this, they enter upon, and have no difficulty in following up, after proceeding about two hundred yards or so, into the jungle, Master first, and Conductor following close on his heels. The former suddenly stops, holds up his hand, as much as to say, hush, and there they both see, standing right in front of them, a small grass hut! Slowly the master pushes aside the small grass door, and there is lying asleep, on a mat, all covered over with a red cloth, somebody, but who that somebody is, is a great mystery, which will speedily be solved. The Conductor himself seems quite certain as to who it is, and quite certain of his just right to inflict sudden and immediate corporal chastisement, on the contents of that cloth, for he clutches a long stick he carries in his hand, even has the hand uplifted, and has to be arrested by the master, who whispers, "look first." Slowly and cautiously the master stoops down, and quietly removes the cloth, which covered the head and face, which action revealed to our astonished gaze, the face of a handsome girl, her head pillowed on her arm, and a mass of long fine hair, all hanging over her shoulders, her lips were slightly parted, revealing a set of teeth, the like of which, no dentist could ever supply, and strange to say, no signs at all of the red betel stain. All this was seen at a glance, which glance was also sufficient to show, that the sleeping beauty in this wild sylvan scene, was not the conductor's wife! Quietly we step back to a safe distance from the grass hut, and question the Conductor if he is satisfied now, that his wife is not concealed in the jungle. He heaves a sigh, says he is, for his wife is a much finer looking woman than that. We doubt this, but he says, Master is no judge. Searching investigations are now made in order to solve this new mystery, and the solution was this. A junior kanganie on the estate, had run off with a dusky bride from another estate about four miles off, and as a matter of course, if he had brought his runaway wife openly to the lines, everything would have been known, and everything would have been frustrated, a letter would have come to master, and master would have ordered his newly made bride to be sent back to the estate from which she had come, so he says never a word about it, but builds a grass hut in the jungle, to which he takes his wife, and where they intended to have spent the honeymoon, or until the rainy season commenced when all their arrangements were so prematurely and rudely disturbed by the Conductor in search of his wife. It is our turn now to assert injured inno-

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cence, and we fiercely tax the unfortunate man with falsely, and calumniously injuring our character, which is now completely cleared. The poor man was speechless, he shed tears and said: "Master must excuse, for I think I am going mad." It is very curious the infatuation most natives have after their wives, even when they are proved beyond all manner of doubt, to be worthless characters. They will blame everyone and everything, but never the delinquent herself. She had been charmed, some one has given her drugs—some poisons—or some other potion, she was the victim of sorcery and magic. She is not to be blamed—why—she could not help herself, it is all the doings and fault of the man. When she comes to herself, she is even taken back and resumes her former duties and position, for it was not her fault. How different this is from Western ideas, where the woman is always the sufferer, and the man escapes free, or as compared with her, free from the consequences. This line of conduct proceeds in a great measure from the low opinion they have of a woman's mind as compared with a man's, in fact a number of men look upon their women, as scarcely responsible for their moral actions, and there can be no doubt but that the mind of the woman is more trifling than as a rule that of the man, but why is this? Is it naturally so? we doubt it—it may arise from the comparative seclusion in which women are brought up and kept, as compared with men, they are not taught to read, write, sew, or any other occupation at all. What wonder, that their simple minds should run to waste and weeds, and also, they are taught simple and implicit obedience to the order of the men, they are not even allowed to think and act for themselves, the consequences of which are, that the good ones lapse into animated nonentities, and the bad ones into secret reckless conduct, which is considered quite a matter of course, so long as it is not found out, or talked about. It becomes an offence after it is found out and remarked upon, not before: the offence mainly resting, not on the offence, but on the talk which it causes. Of course this opinion is not given as a general rule—far from it, but all those who have had any experience of Eastern life will coincide with the truth of this remark.

Walking over one evening to visit a friend and neighbour a few miles off, on passing the lines, a group of women were sitting in front talking. On the approach of a stranger of course they all rose up, and went inside, but we had caught a glimpse of one, a well-known one, she thought she was not noticed, but she was wrong, there could be no doubt about it, none whatever, for here was the conductor's wife! We

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pretended not to have seen her, and told the whole story to the master of the estate, whom we had gone to visit, and who in a very neighbourly and gentlemanly manner, declared his readiness in giving up the runaway. So it was all arranged, that nothing was to be said on the subject, until the conductor himself should suddenly pounce upon his loving spouse, unawares, and secure her. Next morning the man was informed where his wife was, and how his countenance did brighten up, he actually laughed, for would not he catch her now, "oh! that his tongue had been cut out before he accused master, accuse master! And it was master who had found her for him!" As no doubt his spouse would prove refractory, four coolies were requested to assist him in her capture, which request was granted. How the seizure or capture was effected, we never heard, or took the trouble to inquire. But as we were smoking a pipe in the verandah after breakfast, a cavalcade was seen marching along the estate roads and as it passed the house, we saw carried on the shoulders of four men, the conductor's wife; two coolies sustained the feet, and two the shoulders, one would never suppose there was life, so much lively life and spirit, in the apparently lifeless burden they bore, her arms hung down, seemingly powerless, her head was thrown back, eyes shut, mouth open, and the long hair, almost dragging on, and sweeping the ground below. The conductor himself brought up the rear, apparently in great glee and spirits, flourishing a stick he held in his hand and giving the coolies in front periodical instructions; just before passing by, the culprit seemed to have roused herself for a final effort, probably for an appeal to the master, for she struggled and screamed out, but the conductor stepped quickly up, and tied a red cotton pocket-handkerchief tight round her mouth. All the working parties on the estate were stopped, and they stood gazing at the party as they marched along. The servants came running out of the kitchen, and ran round the corner of the road to look: All the women, children, and sick people in the lines, stood out in front and gazed, in fact a great number of the kankanies, and we suspect, favorite coolies too, boldly left the working places, and rushed, to see and hear the news. So that by the time the conductor had his wife housed, there was quite a crowd standing in front of his house. We took no notice of all this, being determined to keep quiet, and not stir up any more mud, in hopes that every thing would settle down. The next day, all was peace and quietness. The conductor was at his work, more active than ever, his wife was at her usual avocations, she swept out his house, washed and boiled rice, cooked the curry, and went on in general, as if nothing had

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happened, all her female friends came to visit her, to hear all her news and all her adventures, and she was quite queen of the day. She had suffered nothing in character, or in the estimation of her female friends, not she! We firmly believe she had risen immensely in their estimation! as being a woman of rare pluck, and well worthy of imitation, they dare not do the like—for would not their husbands beat them well. Whether it was the threats of dismissal, or that the honey-moon sprees were exhausted, and the man and his wife had become aware of each other's peculiarity of temper, we know not, but this we know, that there were no more quarrels or unpleasant scenes, and all "was serene"; from which, we venture to doubt if what is called the honey-moon is the really happy period of married life: we think the contrary. The couple are not aware of the private peculiarities, temper, &c., of each other, and it may be quite inadvertently a jarring chord will be touched, apt to produce or induce a display of temper, and as they know each other better, of course this is avoided, but we are no judge. We may be wrong. It is only the opinion of

P. D. MILLIE.

CHAPTER XXXV.

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JOHN KENNETH was a ship steward in one of the old Bombay and China trading vessels, a trade which as far as regards sailing vessels is now altogether a thing of the past, at all events, as compared to what it was then. The commanders of those vessels in addition to being very highly paid, had in many cases, it may be every case, liberty to trade or venture on their own account! so, it was generally understood, with their liberal allowances they would in course of time, undoubtedly realize a fortune, or at all events a handsome competence. It was an essentially necessary qualification that these gentlemen, should be gentlemen in every sense of the term, because the passenger traffic in their vessels was something very considerable, consisting very often of great numbers of ladies. Thus it was for the interest of the owners of these vessels to look, not only to the nautical ability and capability of the commanders whom they should select, but also to their general style of manner, it being taken into consideration, the character their ship could obtain and sustain as a model passenger vessel, and the Captain had a good deal, in fact every thing in his power, in obtaining this character which was not such

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an easy thing to obtain and retain, as some maybe an apt to think. For only look at and consider the numerous and constant calls upon his patience and temper. He had to attend to the duties of his calling, often under very difficult and trying circumstances. The bulk of the crew, very probably were Lascars, and required the exercise of a good deal of authority and supervision. It may be said: why all this sort of thing was the duty of his subordinate officers, so it was, but still subordinate officers require instructions and oversight. There is a something, some inherent qualities, which cannot well be briefly defined, necessary to all superiors in every important position in life. Just as well say of a manager of some large coffee estate, why, he has a fine time of it, he has nothing to do, he has got a good staff of well-paid efficient assistants, they do all the work, it is an easy thing to be a manager on a place like this. But just try it, just take away the manager who has got such an easy time of it—and nothing to do—so little that he spends a good deal, or the most of his time in the bungalow, no doubt in the estimation of the coolies, supremely happy—doing nothing—take him away, and then it will be discovered that he must have been doing something, and something to the purpose too, for gradually one comes to the conclusion that one does not know, can't tell how, things are not as they used to be, there is always something going wrong, that wants putting to right, and it is not alone, this little thing that has gone wrong, and is not put right, increases, and makes a great many more little things that are wrong, or are going wrong, until the little thing that was not worth notice, becomes so big that nobody can put it to right, and it is just the very same way on board a ship, as it is on a coffee estate in many ways though not in all, because in the latter there are no lady passengers to please and attend to, but instead of this, coffee estates in present times, (not then) have visitors—official and private—whom it is necessary to entertain with as much urbanity as possible, if for nothing else than only personal policy.

For the good opinion and reports of others is in no way to be despised, quite the contrary, rather courted as none, or ought to be indifferent to public opinion and report, they may be needed some day, and if you have obtained them, they will prove that they are friends in need and friends in deed.

In the Captain's opinion, Kenneth was a first rate steward, in every respect all the passengers had always a good word to say for him and of course all good words and opinions in favour of the steward, were just indirectly, nay, directly in favour of the ship and the Captain. A "nice

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ship, an agreeable captain, and such an excellent attentive steward." What more could be desired, the ship was perfect, and it was, Kenneth was a good favorite of the Captain, and when the latter left his ship, with intention of turning a Ceylon coffee planter, he took Kenneth with him, to act as his steward in a different capacity on shore, in fact, to act as his superintendent.

The Captain, like many, or rather most others at that period, made a wrong selection of land in the low country, and some years afterwards, seeing his error, he resolved to rectify it, and purchased another block of land in the high country—and his plan was, he was going to stick to the old estate, where he had built a very large and expensive house and all other buildings in the same style, and Mr Kenneth was sent up to open out, and do all the rough work on the new estate. Mr Kenneth had a failing, who has not? In his capacity of ship-steward of course he had numerous facilities for "liquoring up" at all times of the day and night, so that after a course of time, imperceptibly almost to himself he had lapsed into the habit of not being able to restrain, or do without it. While on board ship, subordinate to his superiors, and where this habit would speedily be observed, to his detriment, he exercised great caution, so much so, that he was never even suspected by his Captain, so much so, that it was considered useless making any complaints or reports on this point as they never were believed, and were just attributed to jealousy, dislike, and a desire to injure a faithful servant in the estimation of his master, why, if he was "three sheets in the wind" at rare intervals, most sailors were the same, perhaps even the captain himself, but neither owners, the ship nor any one else was the worse of that, and as for himself, why he was considerably the better of "a small breeze," at times, no, no, he would not take in any evil malicious reports of his worthy steward. Now, so long as the captain and his steward, as proprietor and superintendent, lived on the same estate, matters were just somewhat on the board of ship style, the superintendent took care that his failings did not proceed too far, or so far as to require notice, when the latter went to Kandy on estate business, he generally had "a buster," and if this was reported to the captain by any of his friends it was just laughed at, what about it, didn't every one just do the same," why fix upon his man so very pointedly and especially, all or most fellows were the same, when they met in with friends at the hotels.

After Mr Kenneth was settled on the new clearing he exerted himself to the utmost, a portion of ground having been felled, and burnt off, he was

indefatigable in his strenuous exertions in getting it lined, holed, and planted. He was constantly knocking about in the rain, dressed in his ship pilot's coat, oilskin hat, and other toggery, he had erected a small hut, of two rooms, as a temporary bungalow, and quite sufficient for all present wants, no new clearing then ever had any thing better.

He kept steady for a long time, probably the responsibility of his position and a sense of the important work expected from him, in some measure tended to call forth his self-respect. For, it is a fact, that position and responsibility act as a powerful lever in impelling men to set a watch over, suppress, and keep under their failings and faults. They have a name and position to keep up, and they must command and deserve the respect of their subordinates; but where this feeling only exists, where it is not backed up by principle and self-respect, the failings and faults will spring and sprout up on fitting opportunities, and, if not observed and commented on by others, they will gradually get more frequent until the man is just as before, perhaps worse. The bulk of the heavy work in the clearing, holing, planting, and roading having been got through for the first season, there was really very little to do before the next planting season. Idleness is the mother and hatcher of mischief especially where the mischief, fault, or failing, has not been thoroughly eradicated, merely cropped down and kept down by more important avocations. Mr. Kenneth had not been seen or heard of for a long time by his next neighbour, who began to think it very odd. Why, just when he had so little to do, he should have altogether given up coming across to visit him; perhaps he was sick; what more likely than that one so long used to a comfortable bungalow and the warm climate of the low-country, when suddenly removed to reside in a mere hut, in a wet, cold and misty climate, should have been perhaps laid up. The neighbour reproached himself for his want of consideration and attention, took his umbrella and coat, sallied forth into the rain to see how his neighbour was living—over black-burnt logs, up to the knees through swamps, for there were as yet neither roads nor bridges; on he scrambled until he reached the verandah of the hut. "Boy," says he. "Sar," was the reply, and speedily out of the cook-house pops the boy, in utter astonishment at the fact that there was a visitor, actually a visitor! an event that never happened here. "Boy," says the neighbour, "How is your master; all right, I hope; just come over to look him up, is he in?" The boy walks sharply up and stands in the doorway, in what seemed to be a

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most inhospitable manner, so as to block up any chance of entry. After some delay the boy acknowledges master is in, "But, sar, you can't go in, you can't see him, he is sick and in bed, and must not be disturbed." "Sick and in bed!" says the neighbour, "and I can't go in, and am not to see him! Why you rascal, that is just the very reason I must go in, and must see him. Do you think I am the sort of fellow to allow a neighbour and stranger in the district to remain in this state, and not see if I can do anything for him; let me in." But the "boy" steadfastly stood in the doorway and said, "Master's asleep, can't go in." The neighbour, a strong young fellow, says never a word, but catches hold of the boy by the "cuff of the neck," gives him a shove that makes him stagger out into the verandah, and thus the doorway being cleared, enters the hut and into the room, which was called the bed-room, just because there was a bed in it and nothing else, and little enough room even for it. He throws open the window hole to let in light, and sure enough there is Mr. Kenneth lying in bed on his back; his clothes were all on, even his coat and shoes, and he had just the appearance of a dead corpse. The neighbour was alarmed; he went close up, raised one of his arms, but it fell powerless; the mouth was half-open, and the tongue slightly protruded. The neighbour leaned down and put his face close to Mr. Kenneth's to feel if there was any breath, but he started and suddenly drew back, coughing violently, for there could be no doubt at all about the breath being there, as also that it smelt like a cask of brandy. The neighbour heaved a sigh of satisfaction; he was not dead, but there would be no doubt about it, he was dead drunk. He drew back and looked round the room—not a bottle, glass, or any appearance of liquor, either in the present or past tense, was to be seen. He goes out and asks the boy what master has been drinking, and where it is, but the boy declares master has been drinking nothing but tea. Master drink indeed! His master was not that sort of master! Master was ill, he had a severe attack of fever and ague. The neighbour was not to be done; he again goes into the bed-room and looks well under the bed, and there a sight is revealed to his astonished gaze. Underneath the bed is positively choke-full of empty black bottles, all piled up on their sides, near the top, just under where the pillow and bolster of the bed was, and so, handy for one in bed to reach, were a few bottles standing upright, some fully corked, and some with the corks half-drawn, and beside these bottles stood a tumbler, also a goglet of water. The neighbour

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drew out one of the half-corked bottles, took out the cork, poured some of its contents into the tumbler and tasted it, and it was brandy. Without any hesitation the neighbour poured out the contents of the drawn cork-bottles on the mud-floor. He then with the heel of his boots tapped all the rest of the bottles: after this he sits down at the writing table and writes a note, in which he stated he had "looked him up." Thinking he was in bed sick, he had hurriedly approached, and unfortunately (?) had broken a lot of bottles under the bed. He had found it impossible to waken him up, and had no idea he was such a sound sleeper; rather odd for an old sailor, but doubtless the new clearing was hard work. After this he took his departure, being perfectly convinced Mr. Kenneth would pay him a visit at a very early date; nor was he wrong, for the next morning before breakfast he stalked into the verandah, looking very shaky and nervous. All he said was that he had been suffering from an unusually severe attack of fever and ague. Would the neighbour give him a "*nip*?" "No," was the reply, "the very worst thing you could take for your complaint." Mr. Kenneth sighed and sat down to breakfast, but not to eat, for he could not touch any food. While sitting at table a kangany came into the verandah wishing to speak to "master," and so "master" got up and went out into the verandah to see what was wanted. Mr. Kenneth also got up and went to the sideboard, opened it quickly, seized hold of a bottle half-full of liquor, also of a tumbler, into which he poured a large quantity of brandy, till it was more than half full and before the neighbour, who just then came in, could prevent him, had drunk it off at a draught. His host was excessively angry, not only at the act, but at the impertinent liberty taken, and told his visitor his mind pretty freely—it was evident he had not come to see him, but had come for liquor, and as he had got it, he had better be off. But Mr. Kenneth had recovered his spirits, or rather the spirits he had swallowed began to evaporate. He only laughed and commenced to sing an old ship song:

The sailor loves his bottle, oh,
His bottle oh, his bottle, oh,
The sailor loves his bottle, oh,
So early in the morning!

So it seems, said his neighbour, so it seems, and you seem to love your enemy most. "Exactly so," he replied, and that is the one good redeeming point in my character, "I love my enemy." After breakfast, the neighbour engaged with him in some serious conversation, and pointed out that the line of conduct

he was pursuing, would eventually ruin both his character and position in life, as also his health; he urged him to turn over a "new leaf," if it was only for a time, on trial. Mr. Kenneth listened attentively, and seemed struck and impressed with the disinterested advice he had received. Well, says he, "I know it is nothing to you, and you mean it all for my own good, so here's my hand; I have no grog in the house now, and I will send for no more for a month; only, in moderation you know, I will take a drop when I visit a neighbour, if it is going, but I will visit as little as possible, and take as little as possible." "Well, well," says the neighbour, "stick to that, and you are all right." A fortnight or three weeks had passed away, during which period the neighbour occasionally visited him and found him always out at his work, fast getting well and strong; the works were getting on well and fast, and everything was completely changed for the better. But the canganies and coolies found they had not such an easy time of it; in fact the former were getting into bad repute and had many a good wiggling, for Kenneth was an active fellow, and understood his work. One Sunday, the canganies, either the result of a laid plan, or it might be only chance, brought master a present, in order to propitiate him, which present consisted of the usual small bunch of skinny plantains, four small oranges, and—one bottle of brandy and two of arrack. Mr. Kenneth manfully resisted the present, said he did not take liquor, &c., but the canganies were firm: "Did master mean to insult them; a present was a present, and they could not take it back;" and they got hold of the boy, delivered the bottles over to him, and departed; the boy, as in duty bound, brought in the bottles, and placed them on the sideboard, where they stood looking reproachfully at Mr. Kenneth, as much as to say, "Drink us up and put us away to rest amongst our empty fellows." Mr. Kenneth looked wistfully at them, and regretted his promise, and began to reason with himself. Now, when one begins to reason with himself, and wishes a favorable conclusion to his reasoning on any given point, he is sure not to be long of finding one, and the conclusion he came to was this: "I have not broken my promise, this is no doing of mine. I did not bring or put that stuff on the sideboard, yet there it is, and I may conscientiously drink it up, without any scruples in fact—indeed it would be the very best course to adopt, to drink it off as fast as possible, put it out of sight, have done with it at once, and caution the canganies to bring no more!" Mr. Kenneth at once proceeded to act upon this conclusion, but there was no corkscrew; the neighbour had taken it away. But let an old sailor alone

for opening a bottle; he cut off the wax, stuck a table fork firmly into the cork, put a knife between the prongs, and eased it round, until the cork got a little above the mouth of the bottle; he then got a silk pocket handkerchief, slightly dampened the end of it, which he rolled tightly round the projecting cork, and as he twisted round the handkerchief the cork moved round with it, always moving a little upwards, until it came out with a pop. Mr. Kenneth then poured out about a glass full, drank it off, and felt very much refreshed. Nothing more need be said, further than that on his getting up next morning; he felt very unwell, and unable to go out to work. He thought a "*nip*" would set him up, and examined the bottles, but strange to say, they were all empty; there was none, not a drop. He did not like to ask "the boy," as it might not have been him—in fact, he began to suspect he must have polished them off himself, but felt rather confused, having no very distinct recollection on the subject. Just then the neighbour looked in, to see if he could borrow any rice, as usual, and as a matter of course, of course, the carts were long past due, and must turn up in a day or two, a remark which had been passed for or during the last fortnight, but still they had not turned up, not the least signs of any such a very unusual occurrence. He looked hard at Mr. Kenneth and said, "Kenneth you have broken your promise, you have been drinking?" He replied, "I have been having a little liquor, but I have not broken my promise. My promise was, I would send for, or keep no liquor in the house. But I never promised not to drink it, if any one chose to make a present and set it down on the sideboard, and he explained the whole circumstances of the case." The neighbour said, he hardly thought he was justified in accepting the present of liquor; he could easily have explained to the people; that he had given up taking any, and it was no present at all; being a present that was of no use to him at all—not only of no use, but a positive evil if he did use it. He thought any canganie of the meanest capacity could understand this reasoning, and it would also have had the beneficial effect of preventing them bringing any more, for it was very evident they brought it, under the impression that it would be the most acceptable present they could offer to master. But even if he did, from motives of policy (?) accept of the present, why drink it? He could just have uncorked the bottles, and poured out all their contents; no doubt it was not worth much, just cheap rubbish, dangerous under any circumstance to use. "Well," says Kenneth,—"I never—the idea, the wasteful extravagance of some folks pouring out liquor, good or bad. Catch me wasting anything. I'm not that sort of man,

why will you believe it, now, when on board ship, in the exercise of my calling, I never could stand seeing anything wasted, especially liquor? So, when clearing away after the passengers had left the dinner table, I used always to drink off all that was left in the bottles, if they had been previously pretty well drained. Not only this, but all the full, half, and quarter glass fulls, left on the cabin table, not from the love of it, but just that it should not be lost; in fact, this was often a very disagreeable duty! for claret, sherry, port, champagne, had to be tossed off, one after the other, so that they had neither taste nor flavour. Besides, left bottles and glasses were steward's perquisites, and whoever has the heart and courage to refuse a perquisite? Why, properly speaking, a perquisite is just part and parcel of one's pay, and if one ought not to refuse, or not neglect using a perquisite, just on the same reasoning why should one not only not use, but actually, as you suggested, throw away and waste a present, after not only accepting of it, but returning cordial thanks to the donor. No, no, never refuse a perquisite or a present," And so on he talked, just the old story, always a ready excuse for any action which one has a mind to commit, where fixed principle is wanting. Still the neighbour did not lose hope of him, if he stuck to his word; kanganies are not the hands to be always bringing presents every day, and a like circumstance might not happen again for a very long time, probably not at all, for the next day Kenneth's better angel being in the ascendant, he roundly rated the kanganies about their audacity "in sending into his house, by means of the boy, bottles of such wretched poisonous stuff which had made him very ill, and if they ever ventured upon this trick any more, he would pay them the value of their present in a way they little expected."

This little deliverance somewhat surprised the kanganies, but it had the effect of greatly increasing their respect for the master, which for some time had been very considerably on the decrease. It spread all over the estate: it was all wrong what they had been saying. Master was not a "Kooode-careen." Now here was a chance for Mr. Kenneth. His employer, as yet, did not believe in what he had been told of his failing. His neighbour had proved a neighbour indeed, and nothing would ever be revealed through him, the very coolies and kanganis, on the estate, were prompt and ready to change their opinion in fact—had changed it. All was in favour of Kenneth and his reformation, if he would or rather could, only persevere. Mr. Kenneth had to go to Kandy on some estate matters, at least fancied he

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had, and he was not singular. A great number in those times, when they got dull and low, suddenly recollected that they had some immediate and pressing business, which urgently required a trip to Kandy. "It was a great bore just at this time, very inconvenient, but it could not be put off." But they never told what this pressing business was, or whether or not they had settled it satisfactorily; the truth being that the "pressing business" met with a temporary arrangement, but would again require their presence in Kandy, next month sometimes. "It was rather expensive this, but must be done."

In these times there was no other method of procuring money, for estate payments, than by proceeding to Kandy, and cashing the order or cheque at the bank. Up-country sub-agencies were not in existence; even the system of chettis supplying cash for a commission had not commenced; and so it very frequently happened, when a neighbour was going in to town for his cash, he would give due intimation to some of his other neighbours, in case they might require, or desire, any brought out also, the expense of the journey being shared, in proportion to the amount of cash brought out.

Mr. Kenneth all of a sudden found, or thought he had found, an urgent necessity for proceeding immediately to Kandy. He told his neighbour the day before starting, asking if he had any commissions, any cash to bring out? The neighbour said, he was in daily expectation of receiving an order for his money from Colombo, and begged Mr. Kenneth, since his business did not appear to be very pressing, to wait until the remittance arrived. "Not very pressing indeed!" says Mr. Kenneth. "Cool, very, how do you know that? Very urgent, most urgent private personal affairs, which cannot be put off for any of your paltry remittances, I'm off this afternoon." "Very well," says the neighbour, "but it's not very neighbourly: however it can't be helped. Here is an order to the watchmaker for my watch, which has been done for some time; will you call and get it, and pay the charge?" "All right," says Kenneth, "I can do that, and a great deal more for you, if you like; only I can't wait any longer," and off he starts. Nearly a week had passed away, and Mr. Kenneth had not returned, when, one day, another neighbour of the neighbour's stepped in: he was full of news, having just returned from Kandy. Says he, "What a fine shindy Kenneth has been kicking up; has not got out yet. We met him with some of his old low-country friends, and was n't he 'keeping it up' in style! A few days ago, he started to come out, and was found late in the afternoon, a little beyond Katu-

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kele, by some native passers-by, lying in the ditch, at the roadside, and his pony quietly grazing on the bank. He was given in charge to a policeman, who took him into Kandy, and deposited him at the hotel. The next morning he was at the liquor again, went into the Police Court, where he made a rambling statement—that he had been attacked on his way out to Peradeniya, pulled off his pony, robbed of everything he had, and nearly murdered. He said he had not recovered from the effect of the assault yet, as he was so stupid, he scarcely knew where he was, or what he was saying. “So we perceive,” said the presiding magistrate, “that is quite evident, no doubt about that. But, in the absence of any other proof, I very much doubt the correctness of your other statements. Policeman, take him away and lock him up, until he gets sober, and after that we will pay attention to his complaints.” So Mr Kenneth was locked up, brought up again next morning, and questioned as to his statement of yesterday or any other complaints, but he remembered nothing at all about anything, and was discharged.

“What a narrow escape I have made,” says the neighbour; and he told how Kenneth was to have brought out his money, but would not wait until the order came. Says he, “It came two days after he left, and I have just been grumbling sadly at him, for it just involves a trip to Kandy for myself. But instead of grumbling, how thankful I am now; why, the order is for £200, which he would have been sure to have lost, and nothing could have been got out of him, for he has not two hundred pence.” And thus it sometimes eventually results, that what one grumbles sadly at, thinks a very great hardship and misfortune, is the very best thing that could have happened. “Exactly so,” says his friend, “Kenneth’s not waiting for your remittance, which you considered a great grievance, and a very unkind action on his part, you may now consider as having put £200 in your pocket. For after you received the money, you were responsible for it: it would be no excuse for you that you entrusted it to Kenneth, and he lost it. You would have been made—legally made—to make it good.” The very thought of his narrow escape quite overcame the neighbour. “£200! Only fancy my having to pay £200! Why, it would take eight or ten years before I could possibly save it on my present pay!” A few days after this Mr Kenneth arrived, and his neighbour went over to see him, and get his watch. He then heard all the story of having been attacked and robbed, and the great hardship to which he had been subjected in nobody believing his statement. It now turned out however that he had been robbed, probably when

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he was lying insensible at the roadside, for he had procured the watch from the watchmaker, but he had not got it now, and knew nothing at all about it. It must have been stolen from him somehow, and by somebody; this was all he knew, and all the conclusion he could come to. The neighbour was excessively annoyed, but what could be done? He sent in a description of the watch and its number to the Police Office, Kandy, caused enquiries to be made at all the jewellers' shops, every likely place, but to this day—and that is nearly "thirty years ago"—nothing has ever been heard of the watch. It was probably taken out of Mr. Kenneth's pocket by some passer-by, and melted down in a crucible. Kenneth even refused to pay for the watch, but indeed no money payment could have replaced it; it was the neighbour's *first* watch; a present from a near and dear relation. There is nothing so bad however but what might have been worse, and when he felt bitterly about the loss of the watch, he congratulated himself on the £200. The neighbour now considered Mr Kenneth to be quite incorrigible; gave up saying anything to him at all, and plainly told him he did not desire his company. Mr Kenneth as usual laughed, and one day came over with a bottle of brandy in his pocket, to use his own expression, to "drink and be friends"; but the neighbour would neither drink nor be friends, so Mr Kenneth considered it his duty to drink it off as fast as possible himself. A short time after he had done so, the neighbour called to the bungalow four coolies, and ordered them to take Mr Kenneth away to his own bungalow, which they did. Now this last exploit had made some talk about Kandy, and the whole story, with probably some exaggerations, reached the ear of Kenneth's employer, who resided about sixteen miles from Kandy. He had begun to be suspicious for some time, and at last his eyes were opened. He makes a rapid journey to the estate, arrives unexpectedly, and finds Mr Kenneth tipsy, for he had now lapsed into that state, or stage, that he never was sober. His employer was not too severe upon him; he probably considered that he himself was somewhat to blame in having so wilfully shut his ears to all the statements that had for so long been reported to him. He gave Mr Kenneth a "month's notice," and hoped he would have all his accounts in order, and in order that he might not go wrong during this period some one else was put in supervision, and to keep watch. No need for this, however. Kenneth was an honest man; his accounts were all right; everything was right except himself. His only fault was his special fault, he was not singular in this respect. A great number of people with this fault were

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otherwise faultless, if we except the faults which this fault originated or brought upon them. More than this, in many respects they were more apt at their work, much more sharp and clever, when quite free from their enemy, than many others, who had the character of being very steady fellows—but this would be only for a time: ill-habits grow apace, and, if unchecked or persevered in, will surely eventually choke and ruin all the good in one; it is merely a question of time.

It used to be a popular belief, and many popular beliefs have proved themselves to be popular fallacies—this belief and this fallacy was, perhaps still is, at least in some degree—that a European could not stand the wear and tear of tropical life, unless he partook liberally of stimulating liquors. But *now* the highest medical authorities give their opinion, that stimulating liquors are in no case necessary for any one in a fair state of health, and particularly in a tropical climate; to such they are positively injurious; and that the less one drinks of intoxicating liquor in a tropical country, the better for his health; and the best plan is, as a rule—of course to every rule there are exceptions—but as a rule, drink none at all. And as a further inducement to this system, just consider the saving it would be to young men starting in life, the amount saved in the wine, beer and brandy account, during the course of a few years, would eventually surprise one. But we would not go so far as many do, and say, because we do not drink, we will keep none for our visitors; we go in for liberty of action, and freedom of opinion to all. If you don't drink yourself, it is no reason why you should insist upon practically inflicting your opinion upon your visitors who may differ from you. By all means keep the visitors' liquor, and you will find they will not be very hard upon it, when they see it is simply set down as a compliment to the stranger, and you do not use it yourself. Under these circumstance your liquor bill will be small indeed, as compared with what it would be were you to fill your glass, pass the bottle, and press your guest. We know very well many will say: This is inconsistent, why keep an article in your house for visitors, which you don't use yourself; if you disapprove of it, why offer it to others? One who does not smoke does not keep tobacco, pipes, or cigars, for his visitors. This is a different question altogether, for the smoker invariably carries about his smoking materials with him, and even if his host did produce pipes or cigars, in all probability he would not use them, but stick to his own. But we have no hesitation in saying, that, even supposing we did not smoke, we would keep a supply of cigars or tobacco

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for our visitors, and we have known many, who did not smoke themselves, whom on visiting they always produced cigars and tobacco, just on the same principle, and in regard to the hospitable customs of the country, as those who did not drink produced their wine and beer, for the benefit of such of their visitors who did. We have not heard of any statistics having been kept in tropical countries as to the comparative rates of death of those who drink and those who do not. But in several cases they have been kept in the old country, and all the results shown are very much in favour of the total abstainer, so much so that many or most of the Life Insurance Companies will insure the life of a total abstainer at a much lower rate of premium than they will those of the moderate, even temperate, drinkers! Take the case of our soldiery anywhere in the East. The strong, long-lived, healthy men are, as a rule, those who abstain, and in all instances of fatigue and hardship, by land or sea, it has been proved, strong drink as a rule is injurious and tea or coffee infinitely preferable. We knew a gentleman some time ago, who had lived in one of the Indian Presidencies for forty years, and all this time had never visited a temperate climate. He never did drink, nor ever had drunk, any intoxicating liquors, during this long residence, tea and coffee were their substitute. He retired to the old country with a well-earned independence, or rather a fortune, sound, hale and in good health, and enjoyed himself thoroughly—the fruits of his labours; but as the end must come some time, so it came to him, nearly ninety years of age. Now, we are not so silly as to proclaim this was the result of total abstinence, in a tropical climate, that it was *all* owing to this, so that all and sundry had just to go and do likewise, with a like result. This gentleman had very probably a fine constitution, and he had done what a great many don't do, he had taken care of it, and he had not done, what a great many do—presumed upon it, taxed and tried it too much. We merely relate this incident in our personal experience, to prove that men can live in the tropics, live for forty years, enjoy, good health: not only this, but retire in good health and enjoy the fruits of their labours. All this has been done, and as it has been still can be, without the aid (?) of intoxicating liquors. To prove that the case just given was simply one of a firm and decided conviction, we may add, that the old gentleman referred to, after he had settled in the old country, kept a fine stock of wines and liquors, which he not only constantly used in moderation himself, but freely pressed on all his visitors, so that the incident herewith given

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was not one of "teetotalism," did not proceed from any "moral convictions of the evils of drink," merely as drink; but solely and entirely from his firm conviction, proved and confirmed by his own practice, that intoxicating liquors, instead of being necessary, are hurtful in a tropical climate. As a rule, many tropical climates are much more healthy for various constitutions than a temperate one. If in a tropical climate one could or would always bear in mind where they are, and take reasonable care of themselves, we would hear less about the evils and dire diseases of the tropics. People take care always to accommodate their clothing to a change of climate, and why should they not also, in the same manner, be as careful in altering their habits of life? The real fact of the matter is, men, everywhere, in all climes, are always ready for an excuse for a drink. It is so in the old country. Every day may be heard, "Have a drink because it's so cold," or "because it's very hot"—"quite chilled with wet"—"dried up with heat." But they never say, "Let's have a gill because we like it." But in the tropics they don't trouble with so many excuses: one is enough, and that one invariably is, "A tropical climate, you know: one must take something." But it might be added, there is no compulsion, no *must* in the case; you just take it because you like it, it refreshes you at the time, and you fancy it does you good. It probably would, if you took it occasionally, at intervals, and with caution and discretion. It is not the use you have to guard against, but the tendency to abuse. What would you think of one, who was always swallowing quinine, James's powder, &c., whether he required it or not, in order to keep away illness? Would n't you have small compassion for that man when he got sick, struck down *by the* very medicines that would have cured him, had he only used them as required?

Mr Kenneth sailed for Australia in 1848, and has never since been heard of. It was hardly the country for a man of his habits to reform in. But if he has reformed, and has made his fortune at the 'diggings,' reads the *Observer*, and recognizes this brief sketch of his early days, is indignant and calls upon the editor to authenticate, we have merely to say his name was not Kenneth, but it began with a K. If this will not satisfy him, our friend the editor can just refer him to the neighbour, the fellow whose watch he lost and who broke all the bottles of liquor under his bed. *We* authenticate, for *that* neighbour, and *that* fellow, is—of course you knew it all along—

P. D. MILLIE.

A WOULD-BE ESTATE PROPRIETOR OF THE
OLDEN TIME.

Mr Jeremy Diddler had resided for a long time in one of the Indian Presidencies ; what he had been doing, had done, or intended to do, is neither here nor there, as relating to this brief sketch, or incident in his life.

Mr Diddler had been a long time *out*, had saved a good deal of cash, and often thought about retiring to the old country, but always put it off, until he had made a "little more." But the more he saved, the less satisfied he became ; it was such a very slow way of making money, by saving. Just the old story : when he had saved a little more than he had, he would retire, and when the "little more" was added to his gains, why, it would be folly to retire just now, just when there was a rare chance of adding another "little more" to the general stock ; indeed, exactly a parallel case with the Ceylon coffee planter who is going home "next year," when it comes, for no sooner is the old year out than "next year" ceases to be "next year," so that next year in reality is further off than ever ; and just so it was with Mr Diddler, when the "little more" was obtained, there was always another little fellow at its back, just coming into bud, and which would produce fruit—"next year." Mr. Diddler was sitting in his office reading some letters, which had just come in ; one in particular seemed to occupy all his attention, for he at times laid it down and took up a pen, with which he made a great number of calculations, until a whole sheet of paper was quite filled up with figures. These calculations seemed to please and satisfy him. Yes, thinks he, my friend in Ceylon is quite right, always providing the *Ifs* and *Buts* don't interfere. I don't like them, thought Mr Diddler, there are no *Ifs* and *Buts* in a deposit receipt from the bank, or in Cursetjee's bond for ten thousand pounds at ten per cent ; no *Ifs* and *Buts* attached to that two thousand rupees, which are paid as regularly, on the third of every month, as the day comes round. Now, the calculations that pleased and satisfied Mr. Diddler were these :—800 acres of forest, fit for growing coffee, at 5/- per acre=£200 ; opening up three hundred acres at £20, six thousand—say, to be sure, all expenses, ten thousand ; then, the second crop, not taking into account the first at all, 300 acres at 8 cwts, 2,400 cwts at 120s.=£14,400, while the expenses on this, to be liberal, would be £7,400, leaving a clear profit of £7,000 per annum. Our friend went over the figures again, very carefully, but instead of reducing his estimate found his calculations had been on the safe side, and far under the mark. Mr Diddler then rose up, went to a press that stood behind the door of his office, took out a bottle of soda water, laid

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it down on the table, as if to consider; but his consideration did not last long, for, from the same place, he took out another bottle, which, judging from the colour of its contents, must have contained either brandy or sherry, poured a little into a tumbler, uncorked the bottle of soda, sending it into the tumbler with a fizz, and suddenly drinking off the whole without stopping; after this, he settled himself at his desk, wrote a letter, took a careful copy and posted the former to Ceylon.

He now became quite unsettled, could not for any time command his mind to the affairs of his duty; he could think of nothing for any length of time. What always would and did crop up in his brain was seven thousand pounds a year for two hundred pounds. Time passed away, and Mr Diddler had become more composed, when he was again upset—more so than ever—by a reply received to that letter which he had posted for Ceylon. It briefly stated, that in compliance with his request eight hundred acres of forest had been applied for and purchased at the upset price of five shillings per acre; the block was in a fine locality, and well suited for the growth of coffee, and that full particulars would be given at a subsequent date, in the letter which conveyed to him the title deeds of his purchase. Mr Diddler had now little heart in his business: his heart was in Ceylon. But he could do nothing, until the full particulars and the title deeds arrived. He fretted and fumed when he saw and heard of a number of his acquaintances taking their departure for the land of coffee, and of promise, in order to examine their purchases, arrange for opening out, and planting, while he was left sticking in his office. At last the happy day arrived which brought him a registered packet from Colombo, which on being torn open displayed to view the long-wished for deeds. He did not do much business that day, but kept poring over them, as a miser would over his heap of gold; there was attached a small plan of the land, with also its boundaries fully described and laid down. It was bounded on the north by a huge ledge of rock, called "Paitan Malai" (fool's rock), on the south by a river, deep and black, with rocky sides, called the River of Destruction; on the east by a high steep hill, called Hope, which however was always covered and concealed by thick mist, was never seen, but every one believed the hill was there; on the west was very plainly laid down a well beaten pathway, which was stated to be in constant use by both Europeans and natives—men, women and children—and the best of it all was, the path was so broad and

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well beaten, that one could with perfect ease, if he chose, ride along at full gallop, could even drive four in hand if he liked; and Mr Diddler congratulated himself on his great luck. He had heard the want, the greatest one of the intending planter, was the want of a road to his land, and that all who purchased, and intended cultivating, spent hundreds and thousands in securing and cutting a road; in fact, considered themselves lucky in securing the cutting of one at any price, while here was himself, actually by mere chance, purchased a piece of ground with a road, not only leading straight to it, but actually forming one of the boundaries of the land. He examined it closely, and thought he saw some small writing on the laid down line of road, so small that he could not read it; so he gets hold of a pair of spectacles which he occasionally used for such contingencies, puts them on and sees that the western boundary is not so straight as he had thought, but, on the contrary, had a great number of sudden turns and twists in it, also zig-zags. He had some difficulty in following up the writing, as of course it followed all the turns and twists of the road. But at last he made it out. Could it be?—and he read it several times over—there was no doubt on the subject. And he read again: The Road to Ruin. He locked up the deeds, and was very grave and silent all day—very thoughtful. Queer name that, don't like it at all. The next day he clapped his hand on his thigh exclaiming, "Well, I am a fool, a rare one indeed; why, Ruin must be the Sinhalese name of some place or other, perhaps a large and populous village—who knows?—quite close at hand, where all sorts of cheap supplies can be obtained, labour, paddy, and what not; in fact everything for money. What a nice piece of luck." Quite right, Mr. Diddler, quite right in every respect except the "nice piece of luck," for walk, ride, or drive, along that road with plenty of money in your purse, you will be perfectly sure to get everything you want, while your money lasts. Make it last as long as you can and make the most of it while it lasts for if ever man was or is to be pitied, it is he who, having travelled a good way along that road, pleasantly enough and quite unconscious of any crisis at hand, puts his hand into his pocket and finds it empty. The road now assumes a dark and dismal appearance; all the beautiful flowers and gay foliage are gone; you feel wretched, miserable and unhappy, the worst of it being that in trying to walk slow, you just seem to travel the faster; you feel a something within you, you cannot stop; and the curious thing is you seldom think of turning

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back, even of trying it. You will push on from bad to worse, expecting every turn in the road will get you out of this state, and again into flowery meadows. On you go, reckless, neck or nothing, until a pop and a splutter lands you in the slough of despond; get out of that if you can. If you do, take care of that big fellow watching you with a club under his arm, ready to push you in again, or finish you off by braining you with his club. Take care of "Giant Despair." But the very last thing Mr Diddler would ever think contingently possible at this juncture was the road to Ruin, Giant Despair and the Slough of Despond. And why should he? If the road to Ruin bounded his property, does it not in a manner bound all or most properties; there is no harm in having it as a plain boundary, so long as you don't travel along it; indeed, it might rather be advantageous to the careful, "Don't cross this: keep out of this road." The road to Ruin is plainly laid down. I see it. Well, if you see it, you can keep out of it, if you are wise, for only fools will travel on this road knowing it to be what it is; in fact your safety is in seeing it, and knowing it to be there. Go, go ahead with the clearing and planting of the land, only give your west boundary a wide berth, don't even fell and clear up to it; leave a good belt of jungle between your new clearing and the road to Ruin, and this, while the road is there, and you know it to be there, you cannot help it, for you hear the sighs, groans, shouts for help—the laughter, the cries of delight, the popping of corks, the rattling of dice, and what not; but none of these things will move you, more than a feeling of pity for the travellers. You have not felled up to your boundary; the road to Ruin, although bounding your land, does not *touch* your coffee. In due course of time Mr Diddler applied for and obtained leave to visit Ceylon, for the benefit of his health! He might more properly, and with more truth, have obtained it "on urgent private affairs"; and very probably, if he had no private affair in prospect at all, he would have used this plea, as a plea; in any case or under any circumstances, these were the only two pleas on which leave was granted, and we believe it was quite understood the terms of leave were just meant as two general heads to cover any requirement the applicant might be under to proceed to any place, either on business, pleasure, or general inclination. But we never could see what use there was for giving any reason at all. Why should one, who is entitled to leave of absence, give the reasons why he is going, or where he is going to? Why should Mr Diddler have applied for leave of absence to visit

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Ceylon for the benefit of his health? For it was just, to say the least of it, a harmless fib. What was the use of his saying anything about his health all? Why did he not ask and obtain leave to visit Ceylon, without saying anything more on the subject? Who can tell? It is one of the mysteries of red type. We will skip an interval of travel, which has been so often described and travelled over often enough by many of our general readers. Suffice it to say, that in due course of time Mr Diddler arrived at Kandy. He was delighted with the place: all strangers are, for they only see the superficial beauties, drive round the lake, and other places, in the delightful cool of the early morning and evening. They know nothing at all of the attending at the court house all day during a broiling heat and then to be told the case is postponed, or the defendant has appealed, or must call another witness. They know nothing at all of the horrors one used to feel, on or after being written to that "your money would be lodged," and you being in a hurry to have it rode slap-bang into Kandy, and found the remittance had not yet arrived, had not yet been placed to your credit, and how, after you had retired disgusted to the hotel, you were met by four coolies lying in wait for you, starving with hunger, no rice, and wanting their batta, and you have to tell them you have no batta to give, for the money is not come yet; and how they will persist in tormenting you whenever you appear in the verandah or walk out into the street, thereby making public to all and sundry that they have nothing to eat, and you have no money to give them, until in very shame you used to go into the hotel-keeper's premises, borrow from him two rupees to satisfy the clamorous coolies, and tell him to put it down in the bill, which would be paid when our money "*was lodged.*" Yes, a casual or passing visitor has generally very different notions and ideas of a place from one who has periodically to put up with all its disagreeables. And so it was that Mr Diddler was enchanted with Kandy. He then took and acted upon advice, as to the best method of having a look at his land. He hired a good stout pony, two Sinhalese guides who knew the locality, and sent them off in advance to await his arrival at a certain point on the high road, up to which he himself would drive. They were provided with bill-hooks, and carried a small stock of provisions, consisting of cold meat, biscuits, cheese, and a bottle of spirits. Shortly after they had gone, Mr Diddler arrayed himself in "jungle toggery," a pith hat, flannel shirt, loose linen coat and trousers, a paper

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umbrella, and a good stout long pole. But he forgot—one is always sure to forget something on these trips—he forgot, or perhaps had not been told of their need, leech-gaiters. The carriage was called, and was driven up to the door. Mr Diddler entered, settled down, arranged the awning, made himself comfortable. Crack goes the whip, away rattled the trap, soon leaving Kandy far in the rear. All was novelty to our friend; every turn of the road presented some new and charming view in the grand scenery which at every point burst upon his admiring gaze, until, without any accident, or untoward result, he arrives at the point on the high road, where his guides were to be in waiting; and, strange to relate, there they were, they were actually waiting for him, instead of the usual course of events, under similar circumstances, his having to wait for them for some uncertain and indefinite period of time. The carriage was despatched to the nearest rest-house, which was not very far off. Mr Diddler mounted the stout pony, told his guides to move on in advance, and so far all arrangements were highly satisfactory. They proceeded along a well-beaten track across some patana lands until they arrived at the edge of a jungle. His guides told him he could ride for some distance inside the forest, and he need not dismount. They proceeded in front, and with their billhooks cleared away any obstructing branches. Mr Diddler was delighted: what a cool, pleasant ride! not a ray of sun penetrated the dense foliage overhead, the sighing of the wind through the branches overhead, the occasional roar of a waterfall as a mountain stream dashed over its rocky bed, the sudden chattering of monkeys, as they suddenly came upon a whole troop of them, perched on the branches of some tall overspreading trees, and then the rush of alarm as they chattered and leaped from tree to tree, which caused such a rocking and shaking of the jungle as actually to dislodge some dry dead branches, requiring them to take care of their heads. In fact the monkeys took such wild and frantic leaps that our traveller was under the impression the whole troop had been seized with a general suicidal mania. Then the rush would suddenly stop, a short way in advance, and our traveller saw the tree on which they had settled; the path ran right under it, so when he came up he stopped and peered up into the tree, but could see no monkeys at all! Where could they have gone to? It was very odd. He passed on, musing on this curious incident, but no sooner had he proceeded a few paces than rush, crash, there they were again, tumbling over one another on the top

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of the trees, uttering loud cries—boo, boo, boo, choo—as if in mockery and derision of the party below. But our traveller's attention was now taken up with something of more importance than a troop of monkeys: the ground was getting rugged and steep, the pathway narrow, and it was scarcely safe to ride any longer. The path rounded a huge projecting rock; against this rock his leg was very much bruised, and in attempting to ease it by swaying to the other side, he nearly overbalanced himself. If he had, he would have tumbled over a steep declivity into a torrent roaring in the dark-shadowed depths below. He got nervous, and said he would dismount and proceed on foot. So the pony was tethered to a tree, some bambu leaves cut for his food, of which the horse is very fond, and so left to enjoy himself, while the rider and his attendants proceeded on their journey of exploration. For some distance they managed to get along very fairly, and one of the guides said if the path kept as good as this they would be at the land in half an hour. On hearing this Mr Diddler plucked up spirits and pushed on. First, on descending a declivity he missed his footing, stumbled and slid down over the smooth face of a rock, and when he reached the bottom found that the seat of his trousers was gone, also the heels and soles of his shoes; but personally he had received no other damage. He was quite ready to proceed, if it were not that the soles of his shoes were gone; what was to be done? His guides, without saying a word, drew their short knives from their belts, without which no Sinhalese travels in the jungle, cut two pieces of bark out of the stem of a tree, neatly shaped them into the forms of the sole of a shoe, and applied them to Mr Diddler's feet. They asked him for his handkerchief, and rolled it round and round the sole and upper part of the foot, examined it, and said "*Hondayi*." One of them then unwound a red handkerchief that was tied round his head, and applied it in the same way to the other foot, and our traveller was shod with this rude and rustic shoeing. He resumed his journey and managed to get along very well, so long as the ground was comparatively smooth and level, but at last they entered upon broken land, and the path lay along the top of the steep descents. Mr Diddler picked his way with great care and caution; a huge dun tree, with projecting roots, blocked up the way, till there was just room to pass. He forgot altogether the precipice below, and stepped rashly on one of the glazed projecting roots; the soles of his temporary shoes having also become smooth, he slipped and suddenly

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disappeared into a dense mass of luxuriant rank vegetation below.

Now this rank vegetation into and under which he disappeared was neither more nor less than a large *nullah* or hollow, filled with dense thick growth of the "prickly mausa." This is a rank prickly plant, every leaf and stem covered with prickles, which can pierce easily through the clothing, leaving a sting behind, both in present and after results far worse than the sting of a bee or wasp. Just fancy every inch of your body perforated by the stings of a swarm of bees, and you will have some idea, although a faint one, of what one is doomed to suffer, if suddenly plunged in a "mausa scrub."

The Sinbalese, at a respectful distance, having great respect for their own naked limbs, looked down into the scrub below, and saw nothing except the trail of Mr Diddler's descent, and instead of doing anything with promptitude and despatch they both sat down, took a chew of betel and commenced a long conversation as to whether he could be dead or alive, and, if the latter, if his legs or arms could be broken: if the former would they be held responsible, or have to undergo any court examination. They even thought of going away back, and saying nothing about it, in case they might be brought into trouble. But, on consideration, they found that would not do, for it was known they had gone as his guides, and some time or other they would be called upon to account for his disappearance, and so after putting off a great deal of time in useless talking, they resolved to do what any white man would have done at first without talking about it—they descended round the edge of the mausa, down to the bottom of the ravine; arrived there, with their knives they cut two strong sticks and with them beat a path through the scrub; after getting some distance in they stopped, and shouted out, which was immediately responded to close by. A few steps more and there is Mr Diddler lying on his back, not a bone or bit of skin broken, but every part of his body stung and blistered, as if he had fallen into a swarm of bees. They lift him up, carry him out, and set him down on the banks of a stream close by; his clothes are all taken off—no difficult task; he is washed down in the nearest pool; his clothes are shaken, and cleaned a bit, then put on. The bottle is uncorked, and a good internal stimulant swallowed, after which Mr Diddler revived; he got up, stretched himself. "No bones broken," says he, "not even a bad bruise—what a wonderful escape; just pass the bottle this way again." His guides now asked if he was ready to

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move on. Says he, "Quite ready to move back, but as for moving on forward, not one step—not for all the land in the country." In vain his guides urged him: there were no more obstacles, a few minutes more sharp walking along a good path, and he would be into the boundary. His firm and decided reply was, "Not one step. I don't care about the land. I'll sell it at any price to any offerer, if I can get any one fool enough or foolish enough to buy it." And thus it was, after all the trouble and expense he had been at, after reaching a point within a few minutes' journey of his property, he turned back and went away without reaching or even seeing it. Partially carried and supported by his guides, the retreat was commenced. They had not gone far, when they came to a halt, set down their burden, and stood listening attentively. There was a cracking amongst the underwood close by, then a rush and a shrill trumpet sounded! Mr Diddler's guides cried out, "An elephant!" shook themselves clear of him, and ran off. Our friend at once recognized what was up; he forgot all about the stings and want of shoes; he ran also, and found he could actually run so well that he overtook his followers, who had slackened their pace; he even passed them, without pulling up. They shouted after him to stop, but he would not, and just ran the faster, and so they all ran the one after the other. They were fast approaching the spot where the pony was tethered. The pony heard them; as they came nearer he arched his neck, and pricked forward his ears. Probably he thought, if ponies do think, that a whole herd of elephants was coming down upon him full charge, for just as they came in sight they were in time to see the animal make a plunge and a bolt, break his tether, and off at full speed in advance, snorting, his tail up and his head between his legs.

Mr Diddler's last breath was exhausted. Elephant, or none, he could run no more, and threw himself down under the tree, where the pony had been tied, as he cried out, "How dreadful. How, or when, is all this to end?" His guides, coming up, had now another long talk, and consultation, during which Mr Diddler finished the flask of spirits. The result of the consultation was that they should all proceed; the pony would not run far, and it would save time and trouble in bringing him back after he was caught. But Mr Diddler declared he could not walk another step. Now whether it was designed, chance or reality, it is hard to say, but one of the guides suddenly said, "There's the elephant; don't you hear the trees crackling close by?" He jumped up, and ran off at full speed, overtook the pony quietly grazing on an open space, passed

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him, and continued his run ; the followers coming up tried to catch the pony, which made him run off also down the path after Mr Diddler. That gentleman was soon aware that an animal of some sort was running after him, and of course it was useless his turning to look, for it must be the elephant. Nearer and nearer the sound of the pursuing animal came ; he could hear the shouts of the Sinhalese—no doubt they were warning him to take care of the elephant. He had read an elephant might be dodged by taking a sharp and sudden turn, so he turned. In doing so his foot caught in a noose, and he was brought up sharp. He looked at what had caught him, and a happy thought passed through his mind ; he was caught by the noose of a bridle. He looked up and found he was caught by, and had caught, the pony. Matters began to look more cheerful. The whole cavalcade now proceeded leisurely, and with comfort, on the return journey. Without any other mishap they reached the high road, where they had left the carriage. The Sinhalese guides said they were going on to Gampola, and as Mr Diddler felt very grateful for their courtesy and attention, he cheerfully offered them a seat in the carriage ; there was plenty of room for three, it was constructed to hold four. The men were grateful, expressed their dread of riding beside such a big master—it was hardly proper, it was not polite ; but he only pooh-poohed their demurs, and said, “Jump in,” which they did. A civil and kind action always gives its reward, and often in a way the donor little anticipates or expects, and it will shortly be shewn how our hero was rewarded for this unusually civil behaviour. As the carriage bowled along his spirits recovered, and as they approached Gampola he was meditating what he would take for dinner. Had he passed that way oftener he would never have meditated at all on the subject, because he would have learned to take just what he could get.

They are now nearing the journey's end round a few sudden turns in the road. Just as darkness set in they turned into the long straight line of road, with paddy-fields on both sides, before descending to the ferry. A long batch of bullock carts was coming slowly along, meeting them ; the road was narrow, and the cartmen, in front, pulled and tugged at their bullocks in order to give passing room ; this was barely obtained ; in fact the wheel of the carriage was dangerously near the top of the embankment. The danger was passed, the last cart was passing, and the carriage driver gave his bridle hand a jerk, in order to pull the horse again into the

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middle of the road—rather too soon, for the carriage wheel caught on the back of the wheel of the last cart. A crack, a crash, and a turn over, and the driver, Mr Diddler, and the two Sinhalese were pitched into the paddy-field, which was just newly worked up and just one mass of mud. The driver, a light lad, soon sprang up the bank and looked to his horse and carriage, utterly regardless of his *fare*. The Sinhalese were quite at home: a paddy-field was a sort of native element to them. They spluttered about, looking out for Mr Diddler, in gratitude for the nice drive they had received from him. He had been thrown into the very worst place, and was spluttering about, trying to swim in mud, but could not. They seize hold of him, each by a shoulder, and drag him out on to the road, just one mass of mud—mud was in his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth; he could not speak, and made signs he would not again go into that carriage, so, supported by his friends, he walked down to the ferry, crossed, and at last safely reached the rest-house.

There, at that time, and it may be even now, bath-rooms were unknown, so Mr. Diddler got a tub of water, had a good wash down, clean clothes, a couple of glasses of sherry, and felt himself again. He now asked what he could have for dinner, and was told the public one had been over for some time, but he could order what he liked. Now, he was hungry, and liked a great many dishes, but strange to say, although he had been told to order what he liked, everything he did like and did order met with the responses "Not got;" "All done," until at last he very naturally asked what *had* got, and what was *not done*. And the answer, as a matter of course, was "Beef-steak, curry and rice, cold rice pudding." "That will do," says he. "Very good, look sharp about it." But their sharpness proved rather slow, for by the time it was served the bottle of sherry loomed rather low. At last dinner was served. The steak was so hard and tough, that after the first mouthful he gave it up as being incapable of receiving an impression. The rice and curry was so hot, as to put him suddenly in mind of the prickly mausa, and to feel as if a number of the prickles had been taken internally. So he pitched into the cold rice pudding, which was very good, but hardly a dinner for a hungry man. So he called for bread and cheese, and a pint of stout, with which he wound up his repast. He then went out into the verandah to smoke, where there were a number of young men, sitting, talking, and also smoking. He

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entered into a general conversation with them, told where he had been, and all he had experienced. They all smiled, and touched each other slyly on the ribs, but the smile was not perceived, for as they did so the hands were drawn, just as if accidentally, over the face and mouth, and while they drew their hands over their faces they condoled with him, and feelingly sympathized with him in his persistent routine of evil incident. But the gentleman with whom they sympathized had frequently to say "Beg pardon, but I did not hear you," upon which one of the young men drew a handkerchief from his belt, applied it forcibly to his mouth, and said he had a severe attack of tooth-ache; the rest of the young men then all got up, and went round the corner of the verandah, saying they would bring something to cure this tooth-ache; but they were a long time of coming back, and Mr Diddler was under the impression, from the sounds he heard, that they had found something that amused them very much, in the stables. So he very feelingly got up, ordered some brandy, brought it out into the verandah with his own hands, gave it to the young man, and told him to keep it in his mouth for a little. He raised the glass to his mouth, swallowed it at a gulp, but pretended it was only *in* his mouth; he then made as if he was spitting it out, blandly raised his head, said he was so much better, but would Mr. Diddler "kindly—get—get—" "Certainly, certainly, my good fellow," cries Mr Diddler, "a nasty thing is tooth-ache. Boy, some more brandy—my account you know, down to me."

The toothache being now cured, at least in a temporary way, the company all again sat down, and entered into a general conversation. The young man told Mr Diddler, the way he had gone about inspecting his land was all wrong. He ought to have made full preparations, in this way: engaged a dozen coolies with billhooks, carried a small tent with bedding, also a stock of food and liquor, and in this fine weather, he would have found the trip would have resulted in being capital fun; also taken a few friends, who knew something about land, and last, although not least, a couple of guns. "Had you provided yourself so, who knows, you might have shot the elephant, which would have been a capital adventure for you to talk about on your return." Mr Diddler here interrupted him, "No, no, I am no sportsman—never could see any sport in murdering, and taking away the lives of animals. I can't shoot, and what is the use of one who can't shoot, burdening himself, carrying about a gun? Even supposing I had taken a gun, it would never have been used, for I prefer, infinitely prefer, running away, and so live to run another day. Hope not, however: not a good hand at running, but it really is astonishing, very, what one can do in that way

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when a wild elephant is behind you." But the young man said, "Come back with me, and I will arrange a party. We don't want you to shoot an elephant, not even to carry a gun; I will find coolies to carry the guns, and also some of my friends who will undertake the shooting, should any chance turn up." But Mr Diddler again said, "No; my time's up; I'm off early in the morning." And he continued, "I feel rather an interest in you, here is my address. When this coffee planting mania explodes, as it will do before very long, and you don't know which hand to turn to, for your rice and curry, come across the club to me. I will give you something better than rice and curry. I will put you in a way in which, if you keep your health, you cannot fail to get on. What is the use of delay? Make up your mind at once, go back, and settle up with your employer, and here, on this spot, now, I will arrange for your funds, to meet all requirements. Make up your mind, come along."

The young man feelingly took Mr Diddler by the hand, shook it, and thanked him from his heart. But it was his turn now to say no. "No," says he, "I am not going to become a rolling stone. I have made my choice in Ceylon, and with coffee I sink or swim. Mr Diddler was slightly irritated. "Well, well," says he, "take my address at all events, and I quite expect, before many months are over, to hear you are coming. Good bye, and when bad times come don't forget old Jeremy Diddler." He was up very early next morning, and roused the whole establishment, calling for coffee, and his carriage. He was very ill, had slept none all night, cats had been fighting under his window, the mosquitoes were unbearable, some horses had broken loose in the stables, and the cries and shouts of the horsekeepers were even worse than the fighting of the horses. There was no coffee forthcoming, for after he had roused up the servants they said there was no fire, and it would take an hour to light one; no horsekeeper was to be found, for after the row in the stables was settled he had gone out into the bazar. At last, his carriage was brought round, but how was he to settle his bill? He had neglected to do so the previous evening. This involved the rapping up the host, who complained most bitterly of that act, for all the amount he had to receive. Mr Diddler was highly incensed; he was late, he would lose the coach, his seat was taken out. He would lose his passage, his passage was taken, and paid for. The young man heard all these on-goings, came out of his room, and told Mr Diddler to make his mind easy; if he was late, he would no doubt meet the coach between Peradeniya and Kandy, and could claim his seat, which piece of information calmed him down, and as he turned round the sharp corner where the road from the rest-house enters the bazar, he once more turned round, and cried out, "Mind I expect you." But the young man clinched his teeth, and said, "I'll stick to coffee." Before very long, many a great crash took place, every one who could get away went, and those who could not bewailed their sad fate. The young man had other

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offers besides Mr Diddler's, but he kept his resolution, and stuck to coffee: an obstinate fellow was he.

Years rolled on. Mr Diddler had retired; he had saved something, and had a small pension, and he lived in London, in the usual way of retired orientalists, spending a good deal of time at his club. Coming into his club one day, he saw a stranger seated behind a newspaper; a bottle of sparkling Moselle and tumbler stood on the table, and an open case of cigars, which Mr Diddler, who was a judge, saw were the finest Havannahs. He sighed, as he ordered a glass of brandy and water, and a twopenny cheroot. Seated on the opposite side of the table, his eyes caught the back of the newspaper in the hands of the stranger, and he read *The Ceylon Overland Observer*. Memories of old times came over his mind, and he addressed the stranger, "How does the coffee enterprise get on?" "Nothing could be better," was the reply. "No better investment going," and then he commenced to talk of the good hit he had made." As he talked, and described his land, which he had bought for 20/ an acre, Mr Diddler trembled. Could it be the land he had sold. So he made inquiry as to how he had bought it. "Bought it from an agency firm, who had instructions from its owner to sell it for what it would bring. Cost me something about a pound an acre, and refused twenty not long ago for the uncultivated portion of it; have got 300 acres in full bearing, and after having paid all expenses gives me an average income of over £3,000 annually." "Who was the owner?" says Mr Diddler. "Why," replies he, "I forget, but on looking over the title deeds it seemed a rather queer name, Diddle, Diddled, or something like that." "Diddled indeed!" cried Mr Diddler, "diddled by myself! Bad enough when one is diddled by another, but really intolerable when one diddles himself!—" and he slapped his clenched fist on the table, rose up, walked about the room, then rang the bell furiously, and when the waiter appeared ordered him off as an inquisitive scoundrel. "Diddled indeed! I must slightly alter the name, change the letter 'r' for a 'd,' and sign myself 'Jeremy Diddled.' But, by the bye, did you ever meet with an old friend of mine, a young man; at least, he once was young, called—?" "Oh! yes" says the stranger, "every one either knows or has heard of him; he never lost heart, worked his way up, and has a very good estate; he is now in the old country, somewhere."

The party of young men whom Mr Diddler met at the Gampola rest-house are all dead long ago, except one. He is not a young man now, but this story is still green and young in his memory. Who was he? That young man whom Mr. Diddler treated for the toothache, at the Gampola rest-house, and who gave Mr Diddler such good advice about not selling his land, was just your old acquaintance

P. D. MILLIE.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

KANDY IN EARLY PLANTING DAYS.

KANDY, the mountain capital of Ceylon, is situated about 1,700 feet above sea level, in a basin of hills ; all around are slopes of mountains, some reaching to nearly 3,000 feet, on which are situated numerous coffee plantations, and, at a lower elevation, the residences of the merchants and many others, engaged in business in the town, to and from which they drive, morning and evening. In the immediate vicinity of the town is a lake, round the bank of which is a well-constructed, well-kept road, or drive, about two miles in circumference. Round this road Europeans ride or drive in the cool of the early morning or late evening ; in fact, it is the usual, needful, and fashionable *airing* for all who can afford to keep a carriage* or horse, failing which, who can afford to hire, so that the Lake road may with all propriety be designated the "Rotten Row" of Kandy. In the centre of this lake, or rather somewhat closer to its northern bank, is a small island, formerly in use by the kings of Kandy as a place of retirement or confinement for any of their wives, when they (the kings) happened to have an attack of jealousy, or the ladies shewed any signs of becoming refractory or unmanageable ; a short residence on the island would speedily bring them to their senses. It is now used as a government powder magazine ; so, from the oldest date, this island has always been in use for the safe keeping of inflammable commodities ! The palace of the kings is now used as a court-house and general hall of justice, and stands not far from the northern edge of the lake, his majesty having had always a boat at his command, in order to pay a visit to his refractory wives, to see if they had repented of all the evils they were said to have committed ; and it is generally well known, how some of them were impaled and roasted alive if they continued impenitent, or their penitence was not believed, and how, in one case, a child's head was cut off in presence of its own mother, and she was compelled to pound it in a mortar.† The lake is not considered a natural one, but to have been constructed under the ancient Kandyan monarchy by forced labour (*rajakariya*). For the king could command any amount of labour for nothing. He had only to issue an order that so many

* And a carriage to a European town resident in the tropics is nearly as indispensable as a pair of boots in a tropical climate.—ED. C. O.

† The case of the wife and child of Eheyalapola, a chief who had fled to the British.—ED. C. O.

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thousand labourers were wanted from every district, failing compliance with which their heads would be cut off and the women and children sold for slaves. This lake not only adds greatly to the beauty of the town and its surroundings, but is of great advantage to its inhabitants in many other ways. It tends in a great measure to cool the air, and all must acknowledge how grateful a gust of wind has often proved when wafted across the water, and how useful, healthy and wholesome for the numerous bathers, whom one is sure to see at their ablutions in the early morning. This bathing does not at all offend the eye of decency, as the bathers just wear about their usual clothing partially covering the body, and which is so light as to cause no inconvenience; a man, woman, or boy, as the case may be, steps into the water up to the waist, and either with his own hands or by means of another standing beside the bather, chatty after chatty of water is raised and poured or soused over the head and shoulders. Then they will duck down, and nothing be seen for a few seconds but a mass of long hair floating on the top of the water: then, after the bodily ablutions are over, they will stand up to the middle and clean their long hair, passing it carefully through the fingers, in fact just making a comb of their fingers. After this they will sun themselves on the edge of the water, sitting on their "hind legs," and the long hair of the head hanging down over the shoulders nearly concealing the whole body, to a casual observer having all the appearance of a hair block in a hair-dresser's shop. Round the back of the lake, in a quiet corner, might sometimes be seen one or two white skins, probably planters, rubbing off the dust and stour, of a long journey into town the day before. Of course, all this was in the early morning before the sun was up, and before any one, except a few horsekeepers, water-carriers and coolies, was astir; and we are not aware whether this bathing is now allowed, or not—probably certain back corners of the lake are set apart for it? * Along the northern edge of the lake is a raised embaukment with a walk on the top; on this trees are planted, and seats placed at short spaces apart. This embankment is somewhat raised above the level of the roadway below, with here and there steps ascending to it from the road, and is called in common speech "The Bund," and just opposite, to the north, with only a road between, is a small grass plat, probably a few acres in extent, which

* Bathing places for the natives are provided and stringent regulations applied to prevent breaches of decency.—ED. C. O.

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separates the eastern portion of the black town, or bazar, from the lake, and is used as a sort of public common by the townspeople, the dhobis or washermen drying their clothes on it during the day the ayahs strolling about with their charges when the sun has gone down over the Kadugannawa pass. But the little fellows neither romp nor play; after making a few efforts at a run they will squat down on the grass, look very sedate and grave, and seemingly amuse themselves by looking at the passers-by and sucking their fingers. Just as the ayahs and children have taken their departure, a few horsemen will make their appearance either previous to or after a ride round the lake. If the grass is clear of strollers they would give their horses a short sharp canter round, before going home to their cold bath, sherry and bitters, and dinner. The common or grass field is called "The Esplanade" and being immediately adjoining the town—in fact, just attached to it—although small, is of great use and importance to all colours and castes of the inhabitants. The streets of the town run at right-angles, from north to south and from east to west. They then consisted of native huts, built of mud and thatched with coconut tree leaves, but owing to the frequent fires which often broke out red tile is now in general use. The houses have all an open verandah in front, in which are exposed for sale, if they are shops or bazars, rice, salt fish, tobacco, grains, curry stuffs, coconuts, and what not, in the midst of which sits the owner, cross-legged, on a mat, ready to supply customers.

Kandy, on a Sunday, was, and ofcourse still is, a sight worth seeing to the new arrival, for then all the coolies from surrounding estates and districts come in for their supplies, a motley crowd. The yellow robe and shaven head of the Buddhist priest, the red and white turbans, the loose flowing white cloths of the Madras and Bombay Asiatics, the skull cap on the bare shaven skull of the Muhammadan, here and there a Chinaman with his *tail*, and the hum, noise and confusion of languages, puts one in mind of Babel. Kandy is much the same now as it was then, only cleaner, and as the old buildings have given way better and more substantial ones of brick, mortar and tiled roof have taken their place. The seat of Government is Colombo, but there is a Government House here, called the Pavilion, of unostentatious pretensions and dimensions, only used during the occasional brief visits of the Governor, which are generally of a temporary nature.* A Government ball is given once a

* The Pavilion is deemed one of the most pleasant of vice-regal residences in tropical colonies.

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year, to which most of the leading Europeans and up-country planters are invited. There are now several good hotels at which fair accommodation may be obtained*. How different from 1844, when there was only one, with bedrooms or rather boxes, looking out into a stable-yard, and the only fare tough beefsteaks and rice and curry. The jail† is a commodious building, but few Europeans are practically acquainted with its internal conveniences. It is largely patronized by natives, no doubt very unwillingly, and it is one of the sights of the town to see the native prisoners marched out and in to and from their work in shackles, for they used to be turned out under guards and made to perform a good deal of useful work, in cleaning, etc., about the town and its environs: a very good plan and one which might be usefully adopted in the old country where labour is scarce and dear. The philanthropists would doubtless raise a howl and complain of the hardening effects upon criminals in having their feelings hurt by being so publicly exposed. But the public exposure would do good and serve as an example and warning to others. It would probably have a better practical effect on the offenders themselves than a few weeks' or months' confinement, doing nothing, which, in many cases, is considered no punishment at all. A European of some position and standing was once confined in jail for some comparatively trifling offence or misdemeanour. He was very fond of the bottle, and had brought himself to think from long habit that "a drop of the crater" was necessary to his enjoyable existence. In jail, of course, this could not be tolerated, and some of his friends, knowing the state he would be in from want of it, filled a dozen soda-water bottles with gin, corked them up, and explained to the gaoler that as his prisoner would probably be thirsty they had brought him some soda-water, to which of course no objection was made. When the prisoner was informed of the contents of the bottles he was cautioned to use them with great discretion, so that none of the effects might be seen upon him, to which he readily assented. But no sooner were the friends gone than a bottle was opened and, feeling himself powerfully refreshed, he opened and finished another; he could not resist, and never stopped his refreshment till the whole of the bottles were empty. The gaoler, on his next periodical visit, reports his prisoner lying dead on the floor; of course a medical man was called, and every arrangement was entered into in order to have a *post-mortem* examina-

* Not many: two or three at most. Kandy has now a Club though.—ED. C. O.

† A grand new one is about completed.—ED. C. O.

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tion—previous to which, however, he was discovered not to be dead, but to be dead-drunk. Upon smelling the empty soda-water bottles “the murder was out”—and it may merely be added, there was no further admission of soda-water.

The original and then only hotel was “The Royal,” kept by Segar* which, in a previous chapter, has already been mentioned. Subsequently various small opposition ones were started: one, in one of the cross streets from “The Royal,” by a man named Jones, another in Trincomalee street, and various other places as time wore on. But they did not seem to succeed, and gradually died out. What old planter is there who does not remember “Hamilton’s Stables”? There in the early morning and late evening friends were sure to meet, either looking after their horse-flesh, which they preferred stabling at “Hamilton’s” to the hotel premises—they were sure to be well looked after there and by their own horsekeepers too, who would not have been allowed to gad about the bazars until their work was done and their charge properly attended to—or, being in town, possibly having come in for the purpose of trying an investment in horse-flesh, they were looking after a nag, of which, generally, there were always some for sale at the stables, or, if not, Mr. J.^oH. Hamilton was the man to find one to suit. A good judge of a horse was he, and it used to be said of him, tell Mr. Hamilton implicitly, tell him the sort of animal you want, at about what price—put yourself entirely in his hands, and tell him so—you will have no cause to regret it, he will suit you well and honestly well. But try and do a bargain yourself, right or wrong, be or pretend to be a knowing hand, an amateur jockey, find out the bad qualities of the animal, exaggerate them, and be blind to or depreciate the good, Mr. Hamilton would quietly let you alone and “get the better of you.” The shoeing at his forge was always considered infinitely better than that done anywhere else, so much so that many planters deferred having their horses shod, even although they were very much in need, until they came to Kandy; better in every way, they were well fixed and clinched, and seldom came off, no light consideration to the planter who, in the event of losing a horse-shoe, might have to send the animal some twenty, thirty, or forty miles to have it replaced, causing no small expense and loss of the animal’s services, possibly just when he was parti.

* Afterwards a planter in Bogawantalawa, and drowned in a river above Balangoda a few years ago.—
Ed, C. O.

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cularly wanted, for it used to be just at this juncture that shoes always were sure to come off!

The best hotel, both in its site and accommodation, was what in later years was started as "The Boarding House," or "David Albert's," because it was under the immediate management of a man so named. As the former name implies, it was considered something superior to the ordinary run of hotels, and intended to be "very select." But in those times the "very select" system did not pay, and it was gradually given up. The name and repute, however, lasted long after the reality had given way, and for a considerable time it was judged "quite the thing" something rather genteel, to put up at the Boarding House Hotel. There could not be a better site in every way; situated on the east corner of the new road, the back part of the building, behind which were the stables and stable yards, might be said to be in or connected with the town, and the front and front verandah out of it. For from the front verandah you look out upon the grass expanse of the "esplanade" with only the road between; on the left, and just at the termination of Trincomalee street, was a small open space of ground with a few stunted coconut-trees growing on it, behind which was the shop, or rather general store, belonging to Mr. James Affleck, at which everything could be purchased, from a pound of nails to a bottle of champagne, and no immediate payment required. All the purchaser had to say was, "Put it down," and the reply would be as prompt, perhaps prompter, "Proud and happy to do so." "But we have just received a consignment of Bass in very fine condition"; and the hand would move into a mysterious looking cask, standing on end, with the top open and some straw sticking out, from which it would withdraw a bottle with coloured label and tinfoil over its mouth; then would follow the creaking of a corkscrew and the pop of a cork, and before you could scarcely realize what all this meant a glass of bitter beer would be put into your hand, which mechanically reached your mouth and disappeared. After this, of course you pronounced it very good; of course, you considered yourself bound to purchase some, and, of course, it was "down," as you might require something more by and bye. This shop or general store amongst the Tamils was known by the name of *tēnkāy maram kadai* (the coconut tree shop), and it may be—if it is still a shop, or—whether or no—is still called so to this day.

On the right was the road leading out of town towards the east, immediately above which is the raised embankment of the lake, on the top of which are shady trees, and seats here and there. This

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forms an agreeable walk, or rather lounge or saunter in the cool of the evening, from which steps are constructed from certain points so as to lead to or from the high road, below which runs out to the country eastward of the town, the lake on the right hand, and the grass esplanade on the left, which then passes the library, a fine modern building [? modern—Ed. C. O.] also on the north bank of the lake; the “Temple of the Tooth,” where, to the curious stranger the tooth of Buddha can be shewn by the priest in attendance.* The old god must have had a very large mouth to contain a mouthful of such teeth, for the tooth shewn as being one of the identical ones which he once possessed would rather incommode the mouth of a horse or bullock. Out still further beyond the temple, close adjoining the road leading to the Kondesala ferry, are a number of detached houses, the residences of gentlemen engaged in business in the town; snug cool-looking bungalows they are, thoroughly shaded in groves of all sorts and sizes. In one of these bungalows, the residence then of our oldest colonist, Mr. William Rudd, the writer spent his first night in Kandy, thirty-two years ago. The Colombo coach office, or where the coach journey terminated, was somewhere just about this spot, and we well remember the first question asked on entering the verandah was, “Where is Kandy?” Kandy could soon be ferreted out—we mean the streets containing the bazars; one had only to “follow his nose,” or rather, to put it plainly, be guided by his olfactory senses, and there was not the slightest chance of mistaking the road. It would be difficult to describe the smell of Kandy in those days to those who have not been through the personal practical experience of it. It was a combination of all the numerous articles exposed for sale in the open verandahs of the bazars: salt fish, curry-stuffs of all sorts, oil, fruits (rotten and ripe), vegetables, spoilt coconuts split in two and exposed to dry in the sun (for what purpose we never were aware, unless for abstracting the oil†), the exhalations from the skin of the numerous Asiatics thronging the streets, natural ones, at all times repulsive to European nostrils, but aggravated and increased by the oil rubbed upon the body. Coconut oil is bad enough, but, of all the villainous smells proceeding from the dark skin, none is worse than

* Not without some influence: the tooth is not frequently shewn.—Ed. C. O.

† Coconut kernels are always so dried to prepare them for the oil press. The sun heat only evaporates the water—abstracts no oil.—Ed. C. O.

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that emanating from an oil called *vay pani*. It however seems not in the least to incommode them; on the contrary, they rather appear to enjoy it, sitting down on their hind legs and gently drawing their fingers over their oiled arms and legs, as if entranced in ecstacy or lost in some dreamy enjoyment. A curious general fact may be here stated, one which is not generally known, a fact which, notwithstanding the writer's long residence in Ceylon, he has never heard satisfactorily explained. It is this: that the dark-skinned races of all shades, wash them, clean and scrub them as you will, have naturally an odour proceeding from the skin, which nothing can check or take away; and this odour is naturally repulsive to the sense of smell in a European, and it may—no doubt does—in some measure proceed from this, or may account for the in many cases almost instinctive aversion one feels in sitting down in a railway carriage or any crowded room in close proximity with a black skin. This feeling of aversion does not proceed from the fact that the man's skin is a different colour from yours, but from the exhalations which proceed from it. Are our philanthropists aware of this fact when they declare black and white to be all alike, "a man and a brother"? If not, let some of them make a trial, get into a railway carriage squeezed in amongst a number of very stout Nega-tapatam chettis, with only sufficient clothing on to answer the purposes of common decency; when at the end of his journey ask him how he feels in his nostrils. Don't let him jump out too soon when the train stops; let him take an affectionate farewell of his relations, as descended from dam, and tears will force themselves from his eyes, induced—by the smell of garlic! In order to quell his tears, let him ask for a kiss of peace on the termination of the journey, and let him watch the preparations made as a preliminary to the kiss. The mouth must be cleared; what is this? Is it the life-blood welling from the heart, wrung from it in agony at the thoughts of parting? Has the poor man burst a blood-vessel? Or is it—only "betel"? After this, if he can take his kiss in peace, and be at peace, he is very welcome to his frame of mind; we do not envy it? After our first night in the suburbs of Kandy we were early astir next morning to have a look about, and also to purchase a sun hat and an umbrella. These are generally the first purchases one makes after arrival, just on the same principle as the first purchases one makes, on arrival in England, are a chimney-pot hat and a pair of kid gloves. "You must conform to the customs of the country, you know," only that the sun hat and umbrella are essential necessities and

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the chimney-pot hat and kid gloves essential absurdities! We soon found ourselves in Mr. Raux's shop at the east corner of the esplanade, and purchased a good thick pith hat, shaped like an inverted saucer, also a paper umbrella. It was a fine cool morning, the sun was not out, nevertheless we unfurled the umbrella, hung it over the shoulder, and walked into the bazar streets, beginning to feel quite an old resident, or at all events being under the firm conviction none could know that we were not. Vain delusion! We had not proceeded far when the painful conviction was impressed upon us that a small crowd was following, and gradually increasing; we came to a stand, turned round, and valiantly confronted them—a lot of curious looking fellows with shaven heads and small caps on the crown of the head, so small that the wonder was they stuck where they did and did not tumble off. The question was put, "What do you all want? Be off with you." The answer was speedily given, "We want gold money—sovereigns"; and they looked fierce, and very determined, as they said, "Master is a new master and got plenty of gold pounds." The thought flashed through our mind, What a barbarous place! here, on the open streets, in broad daylight, are a pack of ruffians demanding your money, and not a policeman to be seen! What if we are attacked, robbed, and murdered, on the first day of our arrival? Dreadful! The paper umbrella was suddenly brought down from the shoulder, and presented in front as a sort of shield from the supposed robbers, whom we again told to go away, that we did not carry gold pounds about the streets. But, instead of going away, they surrounded us and became more vociferous. At last one who could speak English very fairly explained: Master need not be afraid, as they only wanted to buy sovereigns, gold was scarce, and their wives, sweethearts and children were fond of jewellery, and the sovereigns were wanted to melt down, and that for this purpose they were willing to pay or give more for them than they were worth as money. We reply, we quite understand, but we have no sovereigns to sell, the few we have being barely sufficient for our expenses, that our object in coming to Ceylon was a hope to make rupees and not to sell sovereigns. "Go away, we have no gold to sell." But they only laughed and said, "Master very cunning, and keep for a high price; all gentlemen come from England plenty gold money got." This seemed to inflame their already excited imagination: one cried, "I will give eleven rupees each sovereign"; another shouts out, "Have nothing to do with him, he is a cheat. I will give eleven rupees and a-half."

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"And I," cries another, "will give twelve rupees (24s.) if the sovereigns are *kudirai* pounds." What was called the *kudirai* pound was the old George the Third sovereign, stamped with the dragon; as *kudirai* means "horse," instead of calling them "the dragon sovereign" they were was called "horse sovereigns." This sovereign was always in great request, and fetched a much higher price than any others; it was said the quality of the gold was purer, but perhaps the true reason was the colour of the gold, which was of a very dark reddish yellow, quite a different hue altogether from the brass-like appearance of the Australian sovereign. At all events their taste for gold jewellery preferred the dark gold to the light, and so it was that the competition for the old dragon sovereigns was great. Seeing no chance of getting quit of the tormenters, we retraced our steps and so also did they; they pursued us into the very verandah, chattering and offering twenty-five shillings for an old dragon sovereign, until our worthy host had to make his appearance and order them off, and as it was now too far on in the morning, and too hot to go out again, our intended exploration of the town of Kandy was deferred till the cool of the evening, and we lounged about the verandah all day. But the news had spread that a new master had arrived, and had *kudirai* sovereigns, and quite a crowd collected outside the gate, watching for master coming out. But master did not go out; so whenever they could manage to catch him looking, the old cry would be resumed, and in case the distance was too far to hear one or two of them would hold up bags, which evidently contained rupees, and in a mournful manner touchingly exclaim, "Master please take." The news soon spread, "A new young master in this house with plenty of gold pounds in his pocket," and the crowd outside the small front garden, on the roadside, soon increased. But they did not come inside, just merely loitered about, or sat down under the shade of the trees; time was no object to these gentlemen, except, it might be, to "bide their time." "Master might come out," or "The old master would go out." They were no doubt quite sure that he would, nor were they disappointed. Our host's carriage drove round from the back stables, and stood all ready at the front gate. Then, the eager looks and stretching of necks to watch and see if the young master was going too! And the intense feeling of satisfaction which diffused through the whole assembly outside, when the host came hurriedly out, all dressed in white, stepped into his carriage, and drove off *alone*. No sooner had the carriage rounded the corner of the

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road, when a general opening of boxes took place, from which a number of articles were taken out. These they carried in their hands, and boldly came forward into the front verandah: one lays down a packet of pocket handkerchiefs on the floor, with the remark, "Very cheap, finest India silk, proper price forty shillings a dozen; master can take one dozen for one gold sovereign; very great loss, but want some gold to make rings"; and without waiting for any reply or even for "the gold pound," he goes back, and sits down beside his friends on the roadside. Two or three more now come in with various articles in their hands. "Very fine socks, worth twenty-four shillings a dozen. Master can take for less than half price. Here is two dozen, for which master can pay one gold pound"; and he lays down the package of "very fine socks" beside the "very fine India silk handkerchiefs," and rejoins his fellows at the roadside. And so on the market went in rotation, with "very fine" white jackets, linen coats, and what not, all left in the verandah after stating the sale price, which was always at an immense sacrifice. We were quite stunned at the large and varied stock of articles which we were said to have purchased, and which were to be paid for in sovereigns; our small stock would be done, and after coming so far we would have none left to pay expenses out to the estate. While musing over this predicament some other fellows present themselves, with small curious-looking boxes in their hands; these they open and display a glittering array of jewellery. "Very fine gold rings," "a cat's-eyestone," "a large ruby," "fine moonstone ring," "real Ceylon pearls," and what not. "Master must buy to send to England, one ring price only two gold pounds, and when master send home as a present to his friends, just see, they will say it is worth twenty! Fine gold snake chain, worth twenty pounds: master can take for five gold pounds." And the fine gold rings and chains are laid on the table, and their owners step to the roadside, and sit down to watch the course of events. In close succession followed numerous others, with ivory ornaments, elephants' teeth, as also a good-sized tusk, all of which, we were told, we must purchase at a great sacrifice to the owners. A great stir now took place outside; they all began very suddenly and hurriedly to pack up their boxes, and signs were made to those inside the verandah. The jewel merchants hurriedly put all their rings into the cases, and rushed off. The others left the "fine handkerchiefs, socks, white jackets," &c., and said they would wait outside for payment, and rushed out. We were not long puzzled

to account for this sudden movement, for our host's carriage drove up to the door. As he entered the verandah, he said cheerily, "What, commenced already to make purchases? Well, well, you won't get anything in the jungle, you know." We stated we had made no purchases, but that these articles, for which we had no use at all, having got a very large and varied outfit all safe in our trunks, had been forced upon us and left there without our consent. Our host smiled: "I see, I quite understand," and he calls out "Boy!" On a response being made, "Boy," says he, "have n't I told you that visitors here are not to be annoyed by those pests? why don't you look out and keep them away?" But the "boy" did not tell he was promised a "fine handkerchief very cheap," perhaps for nothing, if Mr. Griffin made, or was made to make, extensive purchases. The "boy" might have been called and asked if the "very fine handkerchiefs" were "very cheap," and he would, under the circumstances, of course say that they were. He said nothing about all this. He merely said, "Did not see: busy getting tiffin ready." "You have not bought those things and you don't want them?" says our host. We reply "Certainly not;" upon which he shouts out, "You outside, take away your rubbish sharp," but as they approached rather slowly he caught hold of the very fine silk handkerchiefs, and the socks, also all the other articles, which he pronounced a lot of rubbish, and pitched them out into the verandah drain, where they were picked up by their owners, carried out to the roadside, and carefully dusted and folded up, after which they were replaced in the tin boxes, without the owners being in the least annoyed. They then strapped their boxes and went away, but during the whole of the day several coolies were stretched out under the trees on the roadside, evidently on the watch, in order to run and report whenever the big master went out or in case the young master himself might come out. Our host now looks at the jewellery and says the precious stones are stained glass; the gold is just pinchbeck; and really there ought to be some law against this sort of thing—representing articles for sale to be what they are not, and imposing upon the ignorant. "Here, you fellows, take away your rubbish." They closed the jewel boxes and prepared to depart, when one, bolder than the rest, declared a ring, the most valuable one he had, was missing from the stock, and, to prove it, he pointed out a vacant space in the box, where the ring was supposed to have been. He did not mean to say the young master had taken it, but it must have been lost while he was

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examining the contents of the box with a view to purchase. The master was responsible for it; the master must pay its value. He was a poor but honest man, entirely dependent upon the very small and uncertain profits of his trade; the loss of this ring would ruin him. The host paid no attention to his plaintive wail, when he suddenly changed his form of attack—said he would go to the police office and make a charge of theft against the young master, upon which he was told he could please himself in this respect. But, while stepping out of the verandah, he said, "There it is ; must have fallen down," and he picked it up from behind the verandah post, and walked away!! The young master said, "How very curious, how could it have fallen down there? I was sitting with my back to the verandah post, and the jewel merchant was standing with his open box right in front of me, but no doubt, as he stepped behind to go out of the verandah, it must have fallen out before the box was closed." But the host laughed and said, "Mr. Griffin."

These pedlar pests, however, if one knew how to treat them, were very easily settled at a private bungalow; if you did not want anything, and told them firmly not to set down and open their boxes—it was just useless trouble, decidedly, you would not purchase anything—the probability was they would quietly go away. But say you just wanted a small trifle, just a packet of notepaper, only two shillings' worth : half-a-dozen large tin boxes would be set down and a general rummage take place to find the paper, but no paper was forthcoming; instead of which all sorts of cloth and clothing would be displayed and pressed upon you; the notepaper was forgotten. All they wanted was an excuse for opening up their boxes and shewing the goods, and the notepaper answered this purpose. It would thus very probably happen, that if you were a little soft and pliable your request for only two shillings' worth of notepaper would end much to your dismay in finding you had run up a bill for five pounds, or more!—and after you had become alarmed at the extensive purchases made, and firmly told them to pack up and be gone, the notepaper would be produced!—"Master forgot his paper, very fine and cheap, better take the whole packet for ten shillings. Great saving. Master will gain two rupees by doing so." But if "master" had his wits about him, he could easily get the ten shilling packet for the amount he was believed or said to gain upon it, namely, the two rupees, out of which the sellers themselves would

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make a very handsome profit. The "tambis" were not so easily dealt with at the hotels, and we have often wondered that hotel proprietors allowed their front verandahs to be constantly filled with their boxes to the great inconvenience and annoyance of their guests. Generally about half-an-hour before breakfast the hotel verandah would begin to fill: the tin boxes would be set down right in the middle of the verandah, utterly regardless of the comfort or convenience of the inmates, the owners themselves sitting down on the edge with their feet in the drain, which was all red with their betel-spittings. As people came in a short time before breakfast, the whole lot of "tambis" got up and commenced their systematic torment, "to buy something." They would look in at your bedroom window, even come in at the door while you were washing and dressing, with their hands full of "very fine things, very cheap." On sitting down to breakfast they would retire, and when they thought breakfast should be about done, one or two would get up and peep in at the door and windows, again retiring to report the progress of the repast:—"The masters will soon be out, the beef-steaks and other dishes are taken away; they are eating curry and rice." But what eventually set them all on the *qui vive* was the call, "Boy, a fire-stick." Breakfast was done, they were coming out to smoke. Boxes were opened and everything got in readiness for a general assault. It was just at this important juncture that a funny incident happened at the Royal Hotel, in order thoroughly to understand which it may be mentioned that these pedlars are, as a rule, all Muhammadans, with a fixed abhorrence of swine and pork. The planters had finished their breakfast, and looked with dread out into the verandah, knowing what they might shortly expect to undergo. "What a pest," says one, "it's so hot inside, and no peace out there; what's to be done?" A bright idea suddenly struck one. He rose up, walked to the sideboard, on which was placed a well-cut-into cold ham. He lifts the ham by the knuckle bone, walks out into the verandah with it, and threatens to push it into the faces of the pedlars. What consternation! what a rush and flight outside, leaving all the "fine things" scattered about the verandah. Whenever they ventured to return, a movement was made towards the knuckle of ham, until they were fain to acknowledge themselves vanquished, call for a truce with leave to remove all the tin boxes, and depart. This sort of thing was all well enough for a casual joke, but it would have been rather dangerous to indulge in this freak too often. Muhammadans are very bigoted and intolerant in their religious principles, and if their

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passions had been aroused it might have fared not only with the aggressor, but others also who did not participate in the joke. Never make light of or joke a man upon his religious principles or belief. They may seem very absurd and ridiculous to you, but depend upon it yours appear so in the same light to him. One of the strong pillars of the British power and constitution—perhaps the strongest—is religious toleration. No good, but much evil, has ever been produced by attempting to coerce a man, or a nation, in his or their religious belief, and it is certainly not a subject on which a joke may be with prudence indulged. By all means uphold and further the spread of christianity and civilization, which always go together; but this is to be done first by education, then by an appeal to the rational and reasoning powers of the mind, and also by what is often unfortunately frequently little thought of or held in small esteem—*example*. The story of the Moorman and the ham is no light trifling joke; thoughtfully consider it and you will find many a similar and more serious parallel. Unfortunately for Ceylon, there is always some ham-bone stuck into the nostrils of its inhabitants, and if the religious feelings and convictions of our fellow-colonists are not respected, how can we ever expect “the unbelievers” to respect ours, or become converts to a religious system of perpetual quarrelling and turmoil. We fear some of the greatest obstacles to the spread of christianity are the acts of christians themselves, men who contend about the “*form of godliness*,” which very contentions shew that they practically deny, or are not under, the *power* of it. They do not shove the ham-bone into the face of their “christian brethren” as a joke, as was done in the case of the Muselman, but with the deliberate resolve that you must eat it, or at all events bite it and swallow it. You may tell them it is against your principles to eat pork, or that you do not like it, it does not agree with your stomach, and that you would infinitely prefer having nothing at all to eat than be compelled to bolt that ham, or even a small morsel of it. All your mild arguments are useless: the ham is cooked and must be eaten; if you don’t swallow it when fresh, all the worse for you, for you will be compelled to bolt it when stale. Is this our boasted religious toleration? Are we to tolerate—not only tolerate, but foster and support—the religious principles and absurdities of our ignorant heathen subjects, when the conscientious scruples and convictions of our highly educated and intelligent portions of the general community are very frequently treated with rude

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contempt? The ham is thrust into their nostrils—that is bad enough, but it is not the worst; you must not only eat or bolt the ham against your will, taste, or inclination, but you must pay for it too! But this is a digression, and we leave the discussion of this subject in the hands of the “Editors of the *Observer*,” whose pens are more able and fit, as has been already proved, and whose views and sentiments on these points are entirely our own.

Round the south side of the lake are numerous private bungalows, and there is Harembe House just a little above the drive, situated in groves of palm trees, with well laid out garden grounds around. This was the original residence of one of our oldest, best known, and most respected colonists, Mr Wall, when he first came amongst us as acting manager of the Ceylon Plantation Company. Further up the hill, on the base of the slope of the Hantane ridge, is “Arthur’s Seat,” once the residence of the original founder and head of the old established Firm of Keir, Dundas & Co., and further up still, approached by a zigzag road from the west side of the lake, and about two and a-half miles from the town, is the estate and residence of the late Captain Jolly, named Farieland. We, and perhaps others also, were long under the impression that this beautiful residence was named after, or in compliment to, “the good people,” “the fairies,” as being a spot which they specially delighted to honour, in doing which great credit was due to their thorough appreciation of the beautiful; but this romantic idea was wrong. It is not “Fairyl-land” but “Farieland,” named so in compliment to a friend, or perhaps partner, of the late proprietor. The view from the front verandah of the Farieland bungalow is magnificent: far away on the right and left the blue hills bounding the horizon, and Kandy just below, presented to the sight by a bird’s-eye view. How beautiful the town appears. All oriental towns look best at a little distance off. In this respect it is an undisputed truth, “Distance lends enchantment to the view.” Nothing could be finer than the view from this point on a fine moonlight night, the clear full moon topping over the hills of Matale or Hunasgiriya, the reflection of the white houses in the town below against the sombre shade of the trees in the compounds, the twinkling of the lights, the stillness, absence of all noise except the never-failing one, the barking and howling of dogs; but the distance was too great to cause any annoyance, it only tended to relieve the solemn stillness of the night. The suburbs of Kandy continue for a long distance on the west side on the road out to Peradeniya. At Katukele was the residence of Mr R.

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D. Gerrard, who came through many ups and downs in planting life. The mention of this name will recall to the memory of some old planters, in a sort of dreamy haze, some stories of "the light of other days." Close at the Peradeniya Bridge on the banks of the river, or rather extending from the river on a flat, is [was.—ED. C. O.] the Peradeniya Sugar Plantation Mr Watt was manager, and then sometime in the Fifties, Mr Vallance. This latter gentleman was well on in life, and had some experience of sugar cultivation in the West Indies; he spent many years in Ceylon, and had once the resident charge of the Ramboda coffee estate,* and was held in general respect and esteem by all who knew him. He died a year or two ago on the west coast of Scotland, having eventually retired to Helensburgh, where he spent the last of his life. There are very few sugar plantations in Ceylon. The cultivation of "the cane" does not seem to pay, or to pay so as to induce extensive cultivation, and yet it grows very well and yields very good sugar. We hear the cultivation of sugar in any British Colony is not a money-making concern, and we certainly have never heard or met with any one retired from any of our Colonies with a fortune or independence realized from sugar; the reason for which we cannot tell, having no knowledge at all of any particular specialties attending the cultivation of the cane. The Peradeniya sugar estate always looked a very fine property, but we have frequently heard it was but a poor pecuniary investment, at all events as compared with coffee. Coolies dislike sugar estates; they say the work is very hard; the trenching of the ground and cutting of the cane is much more difficult work than the usual routine of weeding, pruning, and picking on a coffee estate. Coolies don't like hard work, and they as a matter of course don't like sugar estates, at least so they have told us. We need not describe the Peradeniya Botanical Gardens; most Botanical Gardens are the same. A good deal has been attempted here, and with some degree of success, in introducing foreign plants and trees from other countries on experiment. The cinchona tree was introduced here, and given out to planters, at suitable climates

*How well we remember our visit to "Old Vallance" on Kirklees Estate in November, 1859, and his telling us of the grief expressed by his mother and his sister Jean that he so seldom was able to go to Kirk. Mr. Vallance's punctuation was peculiar, notes of exclamation doing duty for commas. The effect was sometimes startling. A thoroughly honest man was Alexander Vallance.—ED. C. O.

and elevations, to try its success. We have heard nothing of cinchona for a long time; is it a failure? or is it slowly and quietly going to do anything for the benefit of our heirs and successors in the third and fourth generations hence? [Has our good P. D. been asleep? Why, we are all wild about cinchona!—Ed. C. O.] There are few now who will recollect of, even in name, one who did much for these gardens—a zealous botanist, whose heart was in his work, and who died, was cut off in the prime and flower of his days. Of course we refer to the late Dr. Gardner.

The bridge which spans the river at Peradeniya is a master-piece of engineering, and strangers and travellers have pronounced it to be one of the finest to be seen anywhere. We may be wrong, but are under the impression it was not only designed, but built under the directions of the late General Fraser, then a colonel. “They say”—to use a common expression—that the building and permanency of this bridge tended in a great measure to settle down the native mind to accept in peace the British rule, because they have it in some of their old traditions, that those who spanned the Mahaweliganga, rode, or drove, or walked over that river dry-shod, would conquer and remain conquerors of the Kandian kingdom, and so they accept their destiny, as written, for the river is spanned not only at Peradeniya, but also at Katugastota! Before this latter bridge was built, which is not so very long ago, as it was formally opened for traffic by Sir Henry Ward, the Governor, on the first of March, 1860, the river was crossed by the usual old-fashioned ferry boats, and similar scenes and detentions always happened here, as have already been noticed as occurring at the Gampola ferry. The traffic across the river here was always great, as it led to and from the important coffee districts in Matale, and a great bulk of the tide of immigrant and emigrant coolies passed across here, on their way to and from the coffee districts, along the great north road leading to and from Trincomalee, Point Pedro, Jaffna, &c. Just above the old ferry, raised above the banks which slope down to the river, stood, and we suppose still stands, the Katugastota bungalow. This was at one time the residence of our old friend Mr Harper, from which he drove every morning to his place of business in the town, and many a pleasant evening have we spent here under the cool shade of the trees, watching the rolling river flowing below. There is also another ferry to the east of the town, on the road leading out to Dumbara and the Knuckles, so that our readers can at once see that Kandy stands inside a sort of horse-shoe bend of the river, which completely

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flows round it, on the west, north, and east, with only a free open space towards the south. We have never heard it remarked, the idea is our own, that the site of the town must have been originally fixed upon, on account of its strong natural defence, being defended from all outward attack, except on the south by an unfordable river. For of course, in the days of the kings of Kandy, there were no bridges. All attacks and raids from the low-country which was the only point on or from which Kandy could be attacked, were thus guarded by a very strong natural defence, and in case of any insurrection or disturbance in the town itself, it could be commanded from the south, on the slopes of Lower Hantane, which led right into the heart of the Kandyan territory; from which they could easily obtain numerous auxiliaries, or to which, in case of successful assault, the residents in the town, could easily retreat and defend themselves in the mountain passes through which it would be impossible for any foe, ignorant of the country, to force their way; and we believe it never was attempted, until the capture of Kandy by the British forces in 1815¹. The king fled to Dumbara, where a few days after he was seized and taken prisoner, and all Ceylon was subject to the British rule in March, 1815, under Governor-General Sir R. Brownrigg, G. C. B.

The construction of the native houses off the street must appear strange to the eyes of a European. At the first glance you would suppose them to be all verandah. At all events the front verandah is the principal part of the house, with only one or two dark holes behind as private rooms, leading from the back of the verandah. In the main streets, these front verandahs are all bazars, or shops, and in the off streets, in the private domiciles, they are the sitting or rather squatting rooms in which the residents may be seen by the-passer by, sitting on their "hind legs," looking out into the street with a dreamy vacant stare, from which nothing seems to stir them up. These verandahs are all boxed in at night in a rather original way—a grooved piece of wood runs along the outside wall plate that supports the end of the roof, another of the same description along the outside edge of the verandah floor, a niche of about a foot broad, is left free or open in this groove, into which rough planks are inserted, made to fit into the grooves, and then slid along, until they are packed close to each other on each side of the groove. Of course these grooves keep the planks quite tight in position, and thus form a sort of portable wooden wall, which, in the event of a cold, wet, windy day, can be put up, or taken down, on any side, or partially to suit the wea-

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ther. Their method of fastening up at night is done at once by means of the last plank, inserted where the nitch in the wood is. All they have to do, is to fasten this plank inside, by means of a staple and hasp, and they have a solid wooden wall just as secure as bricks and mortar, only not so private, because the planks did not fit close, and in the olden times we used to amuse ourselves in the evenings by looking through the chinks of the planks, to see what the inmates were doing, but we saw little to reward our silly curiosity: a brass lamp burning on the floor, and a few heaps lying about, which were sleepers, lying stretched out at full length, all wrapped up or rather swathed, head and all, in a cloth, looking just as if the room was filled with dead bodies; and probably some sedate man who had been sleeping all day, and did not feel inclined for any more, was sitting cross legged amongst the sleepers, chanting some song, or making calculations of the day's profits on a tali-pot leaf. Kandy! We may yet see you again, but never more as we saw you "thirty years ago." Times have changed and "we have changed with them." As water spilt on the ground cannot be gathered up again, so do old by-gone times never return. But we will never forget "the going to Kandy for money," "the tambies," "the jewel and the stone merchants," the periodical meeting of friends who only met when they went to Kandy; for many were the days "of good and bad, or merry and sad," that now while writing these lines rise up like ghosts in the memory of

P. D. MILLIE.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

JUNGLE TAILORS, SERVANTS AND COURTS.

Once upon a time, a man stepped timidly into our front verandah, and stood, partially concealed, behind one of the posts; he fixed his eyes upon us. There he stood and said nothing; but from the determined way in which he stared, or rather glared, there could be no manner of doubt as to his knowing us again. He was dressed in rather a "loud" style: a long jacket without collar, made of coarse yellow silk, reached down well over the body; a pair of trousers clothed his limbs, made of light cotton, coloured with long broad stripes of yellow running lengthways. They were drawn in tight round the waist by a coarse silk string which hung down in front, where it was tied in beautiful ornamental knots and tassels. From the waist downwards, to a little below the knee, they were

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very loose, in fact just bags, but they suddenly became very narrow just at the ankle, where they terminated, so narrow that it appeared almost incomprehensible how he got his feet through them. The feet of course were naked, and very dirty. From the front opening of the coat, below the collar, down to where the trousers were drawn in round the low part of the waist, the black skin peeped out, for these gentlemen seldom wear shirts or any underclothing at all. On his head was a white turban of enormous size, and as the man was rather small in stature he just looked as if it was essentially necessary that he should take care of his feet, walk straight and steady, or he would be overbalanced and tumble, under the weight of his turban. But these turbans are not so heavy as they look like; they contain more of bulk than weight, being made of very light material, just a long loose strip of white muslin, which the wearer takes up in both hands and after a few brief sharp quick turns of the hands in quick succession round the head, the strip, of white muslin is suddenly, and to the uninstructed observer mysteriously, transformed into a most magnificent turban! This head-dress has all the appearance of being too bulky, heavy and hot, but it is not so; the cloth is very light, and the numerous folds, crossings and recrossings give thickness without weight, and so protect the head from the fierce rays of the sun. Notwithstanding this, however, the wearer on suitable times and opportunities will ease, air or ventilate his head; he will sit down during a journey in a shady place under a tree, and with both hands carefully and skilfully raise the turban off the head without at all disturbing its folds, laying it carefully down on the ground at his side; with the sleeve of his coat, a corner of his cloth, or a handkerchief, if he has one, he will wipe all his head, (if shaven) face, and neck, and then sit for some time bareheaded in a placid state of quiescent enjoyment. Having cooled himself, he will then adroitly lift the turban from the ground without unfolding or ruffling it in any way, fix it on his head with as much ease and "nonchalance," perhaps more, than a European would a chimney-pot hat, rise up, and resume his journey. As a rule they are proud of and take great care of the proper arrangement of the turban, and it is no uncommon thing to see a fellow, after adjusting it, put his hand into his waist cloth, draw out a very small looking glass, a few inches square, hold it before his eyes, and give his turban some further adjustment he will then as the glass is out at any rate, give his moustache a twist upwards, stroke down the beard, replace the small glass again in his waist cloth,

give vent to his feelings of satisfaction by expectorating all the betel leaf in his mouth, take out his box and have a fresh chew, after which he rises up on a fresh start. Before "interviewing" a master on any matter of business they always quickly seize hold of the most favourable opportunity of setting properly the head dress, and from the state and general appearance of our visitor's turban it was evident he had not neglected this precaution. He had what appeared to be, a roll of cloth under his arm but, as was afterwards discovered, this roll was just a large empty bag, rolled up, or at all events far too large for any thing it *then* contained; but probably this was a piece of deep forethought on his part, because, as will afterwards be shewn although the bag was empty when he arrived, it was quite full when he went away. Having stared for some time in hopes that our visitor would speak first, and state his business, but as he did not—only stared at us in return, with a fixed unflinching gaze, so that our Scotch friends will quite comprehend our mutual position, on the remark--there he stood, and there we sat-staring at each other like *two putten stots*. It was absurdly tiresome, and we in harsh and rather angry tones exclaim, "What do you want." Instead of briefly stating what he did want, he replied, "I hear master want a tailor to make some jungle suits of clothes." Our reply was, "How did you hear this? No requisition has been made to any one, to procure or send a tailor; the subject has not been mentioned at all; yet, nevertheless, your statement is perfectly true for we do desire and require a tailor: for whom there is a good deal of work; explain and satisfy our curiosity. You say, you heard we wanted a tailor, who told you this?" Says he: "I was sitting in the verandah of a bazaar, at the road-side, when some tambis passed bye with coolies, carrying a great number of tin boxes; the tambis stopped for a little to rest, and we had some talk, and they told me, they had sold to master plenty of brown holland cloth, to make jungle coats and trousers; now plenty of gentlemen call me to come and make clothes for them, and they are all in great hurry, and require the work done immediately. But, whenever heard master had bought cloth, I think I must run to him, Because there is no master like master, and his work must be done, and it must be done cheaper for him than for any one else, and as I am a very cheap working tailor, I must go at once, all for master's sake, because if I don't go very quick master might get some other tailor who would charge too much and also make the clothes very badly. Because master know very well, I am the very best tailor, please look," and he unrolled

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a dirty handkerchief, tumbling out upon the table an immense number of very yellow foul looking documents, which he called "characters."

Upon perusing them, they all seemed fully to testify and declare, that the bearer, "Marikar," had made coats, trousers, shirts, and every article of clothing, in a very satisfactory manner, that he was a good tailor, an honest man, perfectly to be trusted, and was in every respect quite beyond any suspicion. We say nothing, but return his characters, and ask what pay he requires. But instead of giving any direct reply to this very simple and easily answered question, he goes on to impress upon us the fact of his being a very superior workman, and, "Master knows very well what the pay of a good tailor is." Yes, we are aware it is two shillings a day. "When are you coming to commence work?" He coughed, and said, True, two shillings a day was the usual price for common workmen, but master must pay him three shillings, which would be found to be much cheaper than paying any other man two, on account not only of the superior quality of the work, but the quantity he was able to do, as compared with any one else. We object taking his word for this without any experience, and he requests payment by the piece, or for work performed, without reference to wages at all. This is also objected to, on the reasonable plea that the quality of the work done would be inferior, too hastily executed, with only a regard on his part to the quantity got through with, irrespective of the quality. At last the dispute was compromised; the tailor was to make one suit on trial, and the rate of payment was to be for making a pair of trousers two shillings, a vest one shilling and sixpence, and a coat four shillings, which was for the whole suit seven shillings and sixpence, and we were to provide thread, buttons and lining: of course he had his own needles. All was settled, work was to be commenced next morning: next morning arrived, and so also did Marikar. He asked for some clean mats and a vacant space in the corner of the verandah; after spreading out the mats, he wants to know what shape to cut the clothes, and requires a "muster suit," which means any suit that fits you, so that the new ones may be made of the same cut and pattern as the old, or pattern. His wishes are met on this point; he then takes the new cloth, lays it down, spread out on the mat, takes the old pair of trousers, given as a "muster," and lays them out flat on the top of the new cloth, and then, with a piece of white chalk, marks off the shape of the old trousers on the cloth; after this he cuts out with his scissors all along the

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line of chalk, and there are the trousers all ready for sewing ! Here is a hint to our modern fashionable tailors in the old country, who spend so much time, and trouble, in "taking your measure" Marikar does not know what taking your measure is, or if he does, he can't do it, it is not his custom. "Only English tailors do that"; he is a proper tailor. In making the coat it is the same, and requires some tact and experience in marking out the back and shoulders, but most of our readers are aware that a Ceylon jungle coat is no difficult shape to mark and cut out it: he can just cut out to any ? and if it does not fit, no matter, so long as it is loose and easy. With the itinerant jungle tailor it is not a question of fitting, fashion, or usage, but what the wearer's pleasure is, as to how they are to be made. He merely requires instructions how to make them, on a sample pattern, and if any improvement on pattern is desired, it must be explained, as "only a little longer in the legs, an inch shorter round the waist-band, a good half-inch wider in the sleeves." He never even presumes to have any opinion of his own in the matter, not even advice or recommendation, and if you ask it he will only shrug his shoulders, and say, "Whatever master likes best is best; what is master's custom?" This is no unimportant dodge on his part, for if after they are made you should find any fault with the making, he will calmly say that he was told to make them so. It is not his fault, no gentleman ever found fault with his work before. The fact is he cannot cut out any article of clothing without an exact pattern to cut from and if given any extra instructions the chances are that he will spoil your cloth. The cutting out, is all finished, and he asks for some mats; these he spreads out in a corner of the verandah, as near to the kitchen door as he conveniently can, for the itinerant tailor has a great love for popping in and out of the kitchen. He can't smoke at his work, that would be beyond all bounds of propriety, besides most disrespectful to his employer, and so he seizes the opportunity, whenever master goes out, to bolt into the kitchen, and there remain, smoking, talking, and drinking coffee at master's expense, until the kitchen cooly, who has been ostensibly cutting firewood outside, but in point of fact, only watching the movements of master, comes running in and says, "Master coming:" The tailor throws down his half finished cheroot, leaves the tin pannikin of coffee unfinished, makes a rush into the verandah squats down, and commences to saw with extraordinary vigour just as master steps into the house who either believes or not according to his experience that the tailor has

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been busy sewing all the time he has been out. Standing, or rather placed, just at his side, and concealed by clippings of cloth, might be seen a small broken piece of an old earthen chatty filled with ashes, into which he spits out his betel chewing; of course he can't spit in the verandah, and it would be found fault with; were he to spit beyond it or into the drain the red spittings would leave their marks too plainly, and his employer would kick up a row, and so the difficulty was met by constructing this original spittoon, which he removed every evening, cleaned out, and filled anew with fresh ashes, to meet the requirements of the next day.

The tailor had been at work about two days, and had got about half through with the first suit, when the next morning, instead of resuming his usual seat and his work, he appeared, standing fixedly in the verandah, staring as on the first day of our acquaintance. On being told it is time to go to work he replies he is obliged to go to Gampola; he heard last night that his youngest child was very ill. We regret this information, and suggest, could it not be possible to finish the trousers first? he would do it in an hour's time. But he declares it to be quite impossible, he must start immediately; on which he is told to be off, but he does not go. After some little hesitation he says he will probably have to purchase medicine for his child, even call in a doctor. Doctors must be paid, in fact it was doubtful if one would come unless prepaid, and he had no money. Master must advance him two pounds. After a good deal of controversy he agrees to take one, and be back again before the lapse of three days; but he did not return for a week. He said he had been taken suddenly ill, in fact now was very unwell, and had made himself worse by walking very fast in case master would be angry; he had merely come for the sake of his own character to tell this unfortunate state of matters, for he was a great deal too unwell to attempt to work; that indeed his only object in returning at present was to request a further advance of money to consult a doctor, and in order that the clothes might be finished soon it was positively necessary to advance an additional two pounds. Instead of feeling any compassion for the unfortunate sick man, who wanted to borrow cash to pay for a doctor, our indignation was thoroughly stirred up, and that tailor was told he had engaged in our employment, had received an advance of wages in consideration of work to be performed, which he had left unperformed, and now he requested more advances; and if he did not commence forthwith and attend to the work which

he had engaged to execute, we would send for some coolies, and have him forcibly marched off to the police station, under a charge of desertion of employment and receiving advances of money under false pretences. Upon hearing this intimation he retired to the cook-house, remaining there for some time, no doubt for the purpose of collecting and arranging his ideas as to another method of attack, but was no more seen during the rest of the day. In the morning he came out rather earlier than usual, spread out his mat, said nothing at all about his request on the previous day, and diligently resumed his work. We have heard an old saying that "When rogues fall out, honest men get their own, or hear the truth," and this is peculiarly apropos to the native character. Whenever one tells any of the evil deeds or delinquencies of another, it all proceeds from their having quarrelled, for, had they not, it would never have been told. It happened that the servant and tailor quarrelled, which, as it afterwards appeared, happened in this way. The servant was always very attentive to the wants of the tailor, always supplying him with food and refreshments whenever he asked, such as rice, coffee, bread or roti, &c., of course all at master's expense, who was never supposed to know anything at all about it. In return for this very kind, courteous and disinterested treatment, the tailor sat up in the kitchen until the small hours in the morning, making clothes for the servant. We were certain of it, because sometimes on getting up and looking out at that time, a bright red glow of light was seen emitted from the chinks of the kitchen door. Shall we confess it, shall we confess and admit, that we have stooped to act "Paul Pry"? Yes, without any compunction, shame, or hesitation, and upon the very reasonable plea that it is quite fair to fight people with their own weapons, the more especially when no others are of any use or available. Now, if the tailor chose to sit up the greater part of the night making clothes for the servant, we had clearly no business at all with this conduct so long as he did our work during the day, but just to satisfy a very natural curiosity one night, or rather morning, during the small hours, we stealthily got up and quietly slipped up close to the cook-house door, and as the chinks in the door were pretty open, looked through them and saw everything. The tailor was sitting on his mat, making clothes for the servant; he was burning our oil, using our thread, tape, and lining, and we even recognized pieces of remnants of our own cloth—large pieces too, and in no inconsiderable quantity, which had been reported long ago as being "all done," with which he was lining a coat. The best coffee-

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pot stood on the floor beside him, also one of our cups from which he occasionally took a sip. Bread and butter in large quantity stood on the kitchen table, although the boy informed us at last breakfast time that both bread and butter were all done, so he had baked a roti as none could be got until the provision coolie came from Gampola. Our wrath was gradually rising, but worse was still to appear: the tailor stopped his work, rolled up his thread and needles, and we were just thinking of retiring in case he might come out and catch master at this not very dignified occupation, when our attention was further arrested. He was evidently going to have some supper, and opens a dirty looking box, from which he takes an opened tin of preserved salmon—ours no doubt, as tailors don't eat tinned salmon at two and sixpence a pound—and eats it up very heartily. The hand again returns to the dirty box, from which he draws forth an open tin of sardines, with which his supper was completed, part of a stock no doubt which we had in the sideboard; after this he finishes his coffee, puts his hand into the dirty box again, and pulls out a fine No. 2 Manila cheroot. We had an open box standing below the couch in the sitting-room, and had just been mentally remarking—we must have been smoking a great deal too much, the stock seemed so much reduced—and had given up their use, keeping them as a luxury for visitors, or an occasional one for Sundays, and here was this fellow smoking them in the kitchen at one o'clock in the morning!

It is an old saying that "Listeners never hear any good of themselves," and we may add, that secret spying is very apt to destroy a man's peace of mind, or at all events his night's rest. In after life we neither spied nor pryed into any kitchen customs or hospitalities, thinking it far better to suffer some trifling loss and imposition than positively to see these irregularities, for if you watched them slyly, you could not openly accuse them, plainly letting them know that you had done so, and thus appear to your own servants in a very undignified position—altogether unworthy of the master. In proof of which another kitchen anecdote may be mentioned. Returning home unexpectedly and late one night, an unusual noise and stir was heard in the kitchen, so, instead of boldly entering the bungalow and calling out for a light, we quietly peeped in behind the kitchen door, which stood partially ajar, and perceived a sight which certainly never was intended for the eye of "master." The "boy" was dressed for the occasion, in our coat, trousers, and sun hat, with an umbrella under his arm, walking up and down the kitchen mimicking "master"

in his very walk, every action and gesture, threatening coolies, shaking his fist in the face of a supposed kangani. The guests, several neighbouring servants with their wives, even low-caste kanganis from the lines, were squatted all round the room, grinning from ear to ear and exclaiming, "Good, good." At last one dirty looking fellow exclaimed, "Rather dry work this, can't you let us see how master drinks, and see if we all can't copy him!" The hint was immediately taken, and we had just time to step back into the shadow of a white trumpet-flower shrub that grew up to the very verandah post, as the "boy" threw open the door and disappeared into the back door of the bungalow. He did not require a light, for the site of the sideboard and all its contents were well known to him, he could find anything there in the dark, which was soon proved, for from our lurking-place we soon plainly perceived him return with a bottle of "Bass" in each hand. He gave the bottles and a corkscrew to one of the company, and said, "Now you act the boy. I'm master, you know," saying which he seated himself at the table and commenced to eat supposed rice and curry out of the empty dishes and plates which were supposed to contain it. The door was shut, so we again approached and looked through a chink, in order to receive information as to how we ate our curry and rice. The supposed master in our very tone now called out, "Boy, some beer;" and the boy *pro tem.* uncorked a bottle and filled out a glass, which was polished off at a draught—followed up by "Boy, more beer." As there was no response, the mimic master looked round, too late, for the mimic boy had the mouth of the bottle in his mouth and the bottom of the bottle up in the air. A rush and snatch was made, and there was every prospect of a general row, so thinking we had seen enough we stepped into the bungalow verandah and shouted out, "Boy, bring a light"—just as if we had newly arrived. Immediately all was quiet and darkness. After a great deal of noise and calling on our part the boy at last made his appearance, all wrapped up in a white cloth, rubbing his eyes as if he had just risen from sleep, with the remark, "Beg pardon, sir, did not think master was coming to-night, and we were all asleep!"

Now, in many of these kitchen festivities the boy had always an eye to the main chance, and so it happened that when the tailor requested payment of his little account for sitting up till the small hours of the morning, making garments for the boy, this functionary reminded him that he had received his board and lodging, including an occasional festivity of

beer, wine, and brandy, all for nothing, and so he had no intention at all of paying him for his tailoring. The tailor replied he was quite aware he had been living at master's expense, but as the boy had not paid for a single article either of food or liquor that had been consumed, he did not see why he should not pay for the making of his clothes, and if he did not he would complain to the master and tell him all he had been about, what a nice servant he had, who gave parties in the kitchen and drank the bungalow beer and wine. He, the tailor, in view of this contingent emergency, had kept an account of all the bottles he had stolen, which he would submit to master; he was no party to the purloining, he had only taken in the kitchen what was offered him. He would tell everything, he would. The boy was obdurate, and told him to do his worst, but he was forewarned, and so instead of waiting to become defendant at once assumed an aggressive movement, which was this. On the morning of the day on which the tailor was to be discharged, after setting the coffee, the boy stepped a little back, crossed his hands behind, and appeared precisely in the position of a "boy" who had something very important to communicate, nor was there much delay with it. For without even being asked as to what he wanted, after carefully looking out into the verandah and seeing all clear he says very sharply, "That tailor a great blackguard, stealing all master's clothes; master look into his bag before paying him." Having given utterance to this sentence he hastily retires, feeling assured that he had said enough, as indeed he had, to raise our suspicions. On the spur of the moment we enter the kitchen and see standing behind the door the tailor's bag, which was stuffed so full that it would not tie on the mouth, and a number of articles were actually sticking out. A thought flashed through our mind: "Can this be the empty, lean, hungry-looking bag which arrived empty, and rolled up under the tailor's arm?" Yes, it was. Without saying a word, the bag was pulled forth into the middle of the kitchen floor, and from its mouth we drew out our own coats, trousers, handkerchiefs, neckties, in great variety, also sundry large pieces of cloth, which had been reported as having been all made into clothes, rolls of tape, large quantities of thread—in fact, the bag was just a small portable wardrobe, containing our best articles of wearing apparel, also any amount of small "odds and ends." We said nothing, but looked at the tailor in a very peculiar way. He sat motionless, gazing in a sort of petrified maze, first at our action, then at the clothes, and into our face, until

he suddenly became all animation, rose up, prostrated himself in front of "master," and implored him to have pity on an unfortunate man, the victim of foul plots, deeply laid, in order to ruin him. He then explained that he knew nothing of all this, had never put these clothes into the bag. He was an innocent man. "Have mercy on a poor persecuted tailor; an enemy has done this,—yes, an enemy," and he looked savagely at the boy. "Enemy or no," we reply, "you are caught; lucky it has so happened before paying up your balance, for no balance of wages will you receive; go away, and be thankful you have escaped so easily. Had you been taken to court, which we have a great mind to do even yet, you could have had a sentence of at least three months' imprisonment. Off with you sharp." So the tailor arranged the bag, and went away. A few days after this, on coming in from the work, a police constable is standing in the verandah, and the tailor crouching behind him for protection, seemingly in a very nervous state of perturbation. He whispered to the constable, "There he is; "that's master," upon which the constable stepped up and served us with a summons to appear before the court at Nuwara Eliya, to shew cause why we refused to pay to Marikar our just debt, for work performed. We looked at the tailor, and he must have perceived something terrible in the glance, for he made a bolt behind the constable, peeped over his shoulder, and kept saying, "That's master, that is he: a very dangerous and terrible fellow." The constable was told the whole story, but the pith of his reply was, "Master or tailor was nothing to him, his duty was to serve the summons, and in order that there might be no mistake the tailor had come also to point out his debtor"; but he briefly offered some disinterested and well-meant advice, that we had better refrain from assaulting the tailor, in his presence, or he would be under the necessity of taking us into custody. Hearing this, the tailor waxed bold, and said, still keeping behind the constable, "Pay me my wages, my expenses to court in procuring the summons, and I will withdraw the case." But we exclaimed, "You withdraw yourself out of this sharp, or in spite of the constable—" and we glanced at a hunting-whip which was hanging on a set of elk horns, attached to the verandah post. The tailor followed the glance, and when he became aware of its object, suddenly disappeared and was lost to view round the white trumpet-flower shrub. The police constable made his salam and departed, while their victim remained with the summons in his hand. The day on which the case was to be

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heard arrived, and a cold, dreary, weary ride was accomplished up the Ramboda Pass to the courthouse, where our appearance was put in at the appointed time. The whole case was stated, as has already been described, and the decision was (although the whole circumstances of the case were suspicious against the tailor, still a man could not be convicted of theft merely on suspicion: his plea, that the boy had put the clothes in his bag, was very plausible, and with regard to the peculiarities of native character, even probable):—That we had been much too precipitate in our action. No notices should have been taken of the bag so long as it remained in the kitchen; while it was there it could not be said to contain stolen articles, as from our own admission it was the usage of the tailor to keep the property at which he was working there, and we had also admitted he was repairing some old suits. Proof positive should have been waited for, until he lifted and carried off the bag, for even allowing his excuse, "An enemy has done this," would not have been of any weight when he lifted the bag, and carried it off, there could then have been no doubt on the subject; and so it was decided that the tailor be paid the balance of his account, cost of summons, and all expenses. After this was done, we could become pursuer in another case, bringing it on in a charge against the tailor and the boy, for it was evident the one was as bad as the other.

We were beaten, thoroughly beaten at law, by a tailor. So we there and then paid over to him the balance of his wages in presence of the court, and the tailor departed rejoicing. After some refreshment we mounted our horse, and set off, and as bad luck would have it, overtook the tailor in a lonely part of the jungle road, a little below the toll; he was in company with some friends, all of whom had evidently been having some liquor, as they were very merry, singing and laughing. As we cantered up, it was evidently some mongrel song about the defeat of the master, for the chorus and refrain was, "Heigho Durai"; besides the word *durai* occurred very frequently in the verses in what seemed a very undignified way. So our wrath was kindled once more, and on passing the party gave the tailor, who was the chief singer, a cut across the shoulders with our hunting-whip, passing the remark, "Take that for your impudence," and rode on; but soon pulled up, being under the impression that a very foolish action had been committed, and resolved to wait until the party came up and smooth over the matter; but waited a long time and nobody came. A dread and

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a suspicion that we were in for another scrape now suggested itself, and we returned as far as the toll. On making enquiry there the information was given that the tailor and his party had all returned to Nuwara Eliya. We had an idea what they had gone back about, which afterwards turned out to be quite correct, for a few days after a summons was served to appear and answer for an assault committed upon the tailor. So back we had to retrace our weary way up that dreary dismal road during a pour of rain, to appear at the court-house, and the first person visible in the verandah was the pursuer, tailor ! He was safe enough there under the very roof of stern law and all its upholders, so he did not stand behind a verandah post or conceal himself behind a policeman as we dismounted from our horse and stepped into the verandah drenched with wet. It almost appeared as if he grinned a stern smile of intense satisfaction as he surveyed his persecuted victim, standing there cold, wet, and shivering. The case was called—"Assault on the highway"—and everything was admitted as the exact truth. The judge said it was a very petty affair, and he was sorry it had been brought before the court, but as we did not deny using a whip upon the pursuer, it was not a question as to whether the man was hurt or not (and he was glad to hear he was not) but a question of illegal assault, which was admitted, and there was no use in calling any witnesses in the matter. Decision—fined five shillings and costs, which was paid, and the bench hoped there would be no further appearance in this matter; if so, it would not be treated so lightly. The tailor had gained an ultimate and decisive victory, and looked as if he dared us to do our worst, and we well knew if any further assault was committed what he would do, and also that any further appearance in court in this case would be rather a serious affair, as regarded our own comfort and standing, and so had to swallow our pride, pocket the affront, acknowledge ourselves beaten by—a tailor ! which shews what even a tailor can do, when backed by the strong arm of the law ; shews also the strict sense of right and justice to all which governs the bench in dispensing to all, without any respect of race, colour, or station, law, which however is not always justice. For even at this remote period of time we are convinced, our every action in this matter, except applying the whip, was just. Perhaps it is best that the law does not recognize what some people's idea of justice is. Although it does seem rather hard and strict that an insolent cooly can go unpunished, for there are many quiet forms of insub-

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ordination that the law does not recognize or cannot lay hold of, while the master who naturally on the spur of the moment, and in retaliation, gives the offender a club, slap, or a few strokes of a stick, is seized hold of and punished because there can be no doubt of the evidence against *him*. In a country like Ceylon uncalled-for disrespect or contempt for an employer, even although shewn in a very quiet way, should meet with prompt and immediate punishment. We by no means wish to proclaim or insist upon a dominant power of the white man over the black, only ask for protection. Just consider the local position of the planter as compared with the cooly, the former solitary, with few or none of his tribe to call in and consult with on any difficulty, altogether dependent on his own promptitude and decision in acting on an immediate and pressing emergency. The cooly has nothing to do but step into the lines, receive and take any amount of advice from his friends; and so it not unfrequently happens that some ignorant simple fellow is made a victim by his *friends*, in doing or saying what the more knowing are afraid to do or say themselves. We fear, in fact hear, that the general quiet submissive character of the coolies has very much changed for the worse, that they are always taking the law of every one, on the most trivial pretext. It did not use to be so; indeed, if there was anything they had a very particular aversion to, it was going to court. We used sometimes to hold out this alternative in order to bring them to their proper submission, when a quaint old kangani would come up and say: "What is the use of master bothering about taking to court? What care we for courts? Master's decision and pleasure are to us better than any court. Ramasami is a fool—just punish him at once—master *please* give him *nalla odai*" (a good beating), and have done with it; then all the rest of the people will be afraid and behave with proper respect." Again, in another case, a delinquent would be brought up from the lines with a complaint that he had been guilty of some act of grave offence, and a *request* that master would beat him. On these occasions we would pretend to be very angry and give him "a good licking," but the blows did not fall heavy; and the culprit, of course, screaming out as loud as he could bawl, seemed to satisfy, or rather satisfied the complaining party; for they would then say "*Potham*," enough; offended justice had been satisfied, not by the beating, but the calling out! We did not hit hard, being no advocate for beating, and personally were seldom provoked to it; but admit an occasional cuff or kick, which dismissed an offender

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without hurting his body ; but what was better—it hurt his feelings—yes, hurt the feelings of a cooly!—and in this way. All his comrades jeered at him, so that he suffered great humiliation. “Master had beat him.”—“Chee, chee, a worthless fellow.” “Our master did not beat for nothing ; master has never beaten us, he has never had any reason to do so and so ; we are infinitely superior to you.” And thus it was, the harmless beating, only the name of it, did good. We do not in the very least approve of recklessly using the strong hand, condemn it as much as any, and never practised it. But depend upon it, Ramasami—they say he is very different now—never made any row about a cuff, shove, or even a stroke from a stick, provided his conscience, if he had one, told him he deserved it ; and his neighbours would say “served him right” ;—they and their kanganis have even for doing so, thanked

P. D. MILLIE.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

WHAT BECAME OF A YOUNG PLANTER'S OUTFIT, OR THE EARLY EXPERIENCES OF MR. FRESH.

Early in 1845, Mr. Fresh, who had just newly arrived in the country, was put in subordinate charge of a small new clearing of about fifty acres in extent, just burnt off. This was merely the first opening out of what was eventually intended to be a large estate, and so, our young gentleman, placed in working charge, was duly and fully cautioned to exercise great care, and devote great attention to the lining and holing, and had it also impressed upon him, as an incentive, a touch upon his bump of self-esteem, that in future years, when without the shadow of a doubt, the estate had turned out a very fine one, without fail, it would be asked by many a passing traveller, “Who planted this fine property ?” the reply would be “Mr. Fresh ;” and so the estate would prove a monument to his memory and his name, both of which would for ever remain “fresh” in the annals of planting. The gentleman who delivered this charge to Mr. Fresh had evidently a keen perception of the working of human nature, for it is a fact, of course with some exceptions, that however much one may desire and work for money or distinction in any calling, the one ruling passion in the human mind, of course under many shades and aspects, is a desire to become famous, to do something above the common rule and average of life, so that one may not be forgotten after they are dead. This may, on a partial glance, seem a very silly and purposeless

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motive in life, but it is not so ; this craving of the mind has its uses, and in many cases to what important results has it led ! Who would now remember "Jingling Geordie," a rich Edinburgh jeweller, who was in the habit of lending cash to "good King James," if he had not left his money to found and endow an hospital in Edinburgh for the benefit of poor children ? Few who have visited the town and its sights have failed to see George Heriot's Hospital, and as long as this building stands "Jingling Geordie" will never be forgotten. There is a party assembled at tea, they chiefly consist of clergymen and ladies all in earnest conversation, all in praise of the merits of one who has recently died : "Who would have thought it ?" "How generous !" "How very considerate !" He has left all his fortune, no mean one, to build and endow a church. Now the deceased, when alive, was considered by all, as he really was, an utter skinflint ; as well expect to get blood out of a stone, as a shilling from him for any charitable or religious purpose. When he did go to church he would slip into the plate a threepenny piece, the lowest value of silver coin ; indeed it was said he had coppers in his pockets, and if nobody was observing him, would drop in a penny or even a half-penny. But to make up for all this, when he died he left all his money as stated. But upon what principle was this done ? He was obliged to leave his money behind him ; if he could have taken it away, would he have done this ? Or it may be the principle was merely personal vanity,—a monument to himself : the charity, the hospital, or the church is called after his own name. Yes ; Mr. Fresh's superior hit hard on the weak point of human nature. Many would have said, "Your pay will be increased ; you will be promoted to a more important charge ; you will have a fine bungalow, or what not." He said nothing of the sort, but considered it quite sufficient to answer all purposes briefly to remark, "You will make a name for yourself, you will become famous, never be forgotten."

Of course Mr. Fresh knew nothing at all about lining and holing, had never seen it done, scarcely even heard of it. But there was a good conductor on the clearing, who knew all about this sort of work, and would explain everything, and as Mr. Fresh had sense enough to know it was useless in him giving any orders on a work of which he was entirely ignorant, the whole affair was left to the conductor. The conductor said, some people lined with eight or a dozen ropes and a cross one, but this way was "plenty trouble," and just no use at all. His plan

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was one rope and a stick, and "Master, just see how fast and cheap he would do it." Besides three coolies were quite enough, one at each end of the rope and one to hold the stick and put in the pegs, and as for carrying the pegs, any boy or woman would do, and so the lining of the new clearing was fairly commenced. All that was done was to keep the pegs straight up and down the line. Such an idea as having them straight also crossways never entered their heads. After a considerable block of land was put out in pegs, the Periya Durai came over and had an inspection. "Fresh" says he, you are all wrong; all these pegs will have to be pulled up, and the work done over again with greater correctness. What have you been thinking about? Just look up that line." So Mr. Fresh's eye followed those of the superior and sure enough up the hill face, all glittering in the rising sun, stood the white pegs representing a forked appearance, straight for a little distance, then suddenly running off at right angles, first to one side and then to the other. He was confounded, and could not understand the cause until it was explained, that his shifting the rope had not been continued on the same line. He had moved the rope and taken its continuation from the last peg in the line, without looking to see if the new line of rope laid down was a continuation of the row of pegs put in. But his superior told him, as the men must commence holing next day, there was no time to do the work over again, "So just run your rope up the proper line, pull up the pegs, and make them fit in as well as you can;" which was done, and the next day men were put on to hole. But it was found the lines of pegs put down were not nearly sufficient, so three or four men set to work on one line at short distances apart. When the day's work was done, and previous to dismissing the coolies, Mr. Fresh examined the holes, to see if they were all right in breadth, depth, and circumference; of course, he found that they were all wrong, and the defaulter could not be ascertained; every one denied being the author of the insufficient hole, and said it was his comrade; the latter, in his turn, fired up and declared he had never cut that hole, and put the blame on somebody else. So Mr. Fresh called out for the kangani, in order to settle the dispute. After a great deal of calling and bawling, that functionary stepped out from the recess of a huge tree stump, where he had spent the best part of the day, snug and warm, on its leeward side. He shook his long stick, said he knew very well who was the culprit, pounced upon a boy, evidently not very robust, abused

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all his relations, applied his stick most vigorously on the mat bag which covered his shoulders, which, of course, made a loud rattling noise, and, of course also, did not hurt him. So the real culprits, the strong lazy fellows, went off to the lines, and the small boy, who dared not beard the kangani, was made to put their work to rights, after having finished his own. It was evident this sort of thing could not be allowed to go on, and after a good deal of consultation as to what was best to be done, the conductor said: "I know a plan; just allow me one or two days, and there will be plenty of pegs put out, and master will have no more trouble. Master, please give me an old shirt." Mr. Fresh started. He had, both at home and on the voyage out, heard a good deal about the extortionate craving of the natives for presents, and their unreasonable demands and expectations in this way on all occasions; he had been cautioned against giving way to them in this respect, but still it might be the custom before commencing any new works on an estate to bestow a small present on the man in charge. So he replied rather cautiously, he had no old shirts, his clothes being all like himself—fresh and new—and he was also of opinion that the demand, even for an old shirt, was rather premature. However, after a few days, if the lining went on well, and the present difficulty was safely got over, the conductor should have a new shirt and one with the best and brightest pattern. The conductor actually shewed his teeth, which was his way of laughing, and said, "I see, master not understand. I am one proper man, and never ask presents from any one; master say 'Take' I say 'No.' My father and mother very rich and very respectable people in the Kukulu Korale, and very great shame for me to ask or take present from master. All I want is to do the work properly, and get a good character from master; that is quite enough for me. I don't care for shirts, pay, or anything, only good character. What I wanted an old shirt for was to tear up into strips and make marks on the ropes, but, if master don't care, a new one will be better." Mr. Fresh now goes into the bungalow and brings out a shirt, which he hands over to the conductor, who immediately commences to tear it all up into pieces—six inches in length by one in breadth. He then takes all the lining ropes and joins them all into one. Then, with the help of a stick, six feet in length, he inserts into the plies of the rope the torn pieces of shirt, and there they hung like small flags attached to the rope, six feet apart. When it was all done he explained to his

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master that the rope was laid down on the clearing in the direction the lines were required to run, and that a peg was put into the ground just where the small pieces of shirt were twisted into the rope, and Mr. Fresh said he quite understood. The rope was then coiled up and laid aside in the verandah corner, to be ready for its duties next day, and the conductor told he could go; but he did not, and began to shiver and say he felt very cold, he had no idea it was so cold in this part of the country or he would have brought his warm clothes with him, but it was too late now to go back for them just when master, so particularly required his services. Master had got "too much" warm clothes in his trunks, he had seen them when master took out the shirt—his teeth now began to chatter and rattle—and he said he was afraid of fever and ague; what should be done? He was sure to sicken unless he had some clothes; would master just give him a very old flannel shirt? So Mr. Fresh opened a box, sought about, tumbled all the clothes out, and picked out a half-worn shirt, which he presented to the conductor. It took a very long time to get all the clothes into the box again, but when they were at last all put back, the box, instead of being full, as when it was opened, was half empty, and what had originally filled that half-empty space was now in the arms of the conductor in the shape of trousers, vests, coats, &c., in great variety!! The next morning the conductor came to the bungalow for the rope, in order to start the lining, and, as Mr. Fresh long afterwards remarked, the sight and remembrance of the appearance of that man provoked many a hearty laugh; and as a good "*guffaw*" is a very healthy thing, often better than a fee to a doctor, our friend was quite satisfied, more than satisfied, that he had in this way most decidedly received more than full value for the clothes, of which he had allowed himself to be so easily despoiled. The conductor was dressed in "master's clothes." He had cut off the lower legs of the trousers immediately under the knees, and the pieces so cut off were formed into a cap which he had placed on his head. This head-covering was tied tight with a string at the top, presenting somewhat of the appearance of a cone or sugar loaf, or what boys in the old country used to make out of plaited rushes and call a "fool's cap." The back of the vest was turned to the front, where it presented an unruffled surface, and of course was buttoned behind, but the man had a knowing design in this. It was rainy, and the wet would spoil the front, possibly get through the button holes! He would save

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the front cloth for a good day in order to show off the dress, and only expose the back lining to the wet. The sleeves of the coat were much too long and were rolled up nearly to the elbow; a bright red pocket-handkerchief was tied round his waist, and another one of a yellow colour round his head to keep the "fool's cap" in position. He had also on a pair of master's shoes but no stockings; the shoes of course were much too big for him, but the spare spaces were all filled up with water, as the rain which trickled down his bare lower extremities of course all lodged in the shoes. Wasn't the conductor a swell, and did not all the kanganis, even the head kangani himself, admire and envy him! Indeed they were all quite jealous, and came in a body that very afternoon, and stood very patiently and meek-looking in the verandah, and impressed very earnestly on Mr Fresh that they were all very cold. That gentleman said it was nasty weather, and as he had still a few dozen cumblies left, they should have one each, so he went into the bungalow, and with his own hands brought out some of the warmest of the cumblies, and presented the kanganis each with one. It was evident Mr Fresh did not require a cumby next his heart, for a warm heart had he. It received a sudden chill however. Some of the kanganis coldly took the cumby, looked at it, stepped forward and laid it down at the door; others shook their heads, retired behind the verandah post and did not touch it. But the master was touched. He thought to himself, perhaps even said, "Poor fellows, how very honourable and honest; of course you have no money to pay for the blankets, and like stern upright men as you all seem to be, are averse to run into debt! You would not feel comfortable, even under a comfortable blanket, if it was not paid for. You have risen immensely in my estimation, really I am beginning to think that all the stories I heard and all the cautions received as to the extortionate customs prevalent amongst you, were just meant as the usual 'sells' with which all new arrivals are treated." Just then the conductor came in very opportunely as he was the only interpreter. So the conductor acting as spokesman, told the kanganis that payment would not be required for the cumblies. Their reply to this was, "Cumblies were only for coolies; they were not coolies; they wanted clothes. Master had plenty of very fine clothes." And they glared with envious eagerness at the conductor or rather his dress. On this conversation being reported to master, the very natural remark he made was that there were six kanganis, besides very probably another six in the lines, and if he was to accede to their requests or rather demands, he would

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have no clothes left to himself! that he had when out at the working place that very day promised three or four coolies who seemed ill with ague, that they should have some coats if they came to the bungalow. And just as this statement was made the coolies arrived and claimed fulfilment of the promise given, and as even the conductor said, "Master must keep his word, but don't do anything like this again," the clothes were given. The wrath of the kanganis, real or assumed, now burst forth: "What sort of an estate was this, with a master upon it who knew nothing at all!" They, the kanganis, had secured and brought a large labour supply, and now they were positively insulted; the coolies had got presents of fine clothes from master, while they, the kanganis, had been offered a cumblie, and as a very particular favour they would get it for nothing! They would not remain on such a shabbily managed estate; they would go and take all the coolies with them. Here was a nice fix into which Mr Fresh and his conductor were fixed! So they retired and had a consultation, the result of which was that the kanganis were, if possible, to be pacified, and more clothes *must* be given away in presents; and the boxes were opened, several unimportant articles brought out, such as handkerchiefs, linen vests, &c. But it would not do: they must all have coats. As it is needless to dwell any longer on this subject, the result may be mentioned, which was that two or three of Mr Fresh's boxes had a good deal of empty space in them, and the empty spaces in his own head were filled up with practical experiences. There is no better stuffing for filling up the cavities in a man's brain than practical experiences. Like stuffing a tooth the operation is rather unpleasant to the time—in fact, often painful—but when the practical experiences in the brain, like the stuffing in the tooth, get hardened in and consolidated, then we feel the benefit and become aware of the many and great advantages of the originally unpleasant operation. It is in vain to say these nasty experiences are no use—"I know everything." As well might one say, as many have said to their cost, "My tooth is all sound, just a little black spot on it; what is the use of scraping and stuffing away at that little speck? It requires no stuffing; such a proceeding would only create pain, where at present there is none." We grant that a little of the stuffing of practical experience would cause pain, where none was before, but it will soon be over, and leave the sufferer with his brain hardened and strengthened and fit for many a hard day's work for many days to come. Now, any good-hearted fellow would feel gratified at having pleased or rendered comfortable

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these naked people ; but what was his surprise after a few days to see that the articles of clothing he had so generously given away were passed into other hands, worn by coolies on other estates. One day a cooly stepped into his verandah with a letter from a neighbour about three miles off, and Mr Fresh at once recognized that he wore a flowered silk vest which a week before had been given to one of his own people, Karuppen kangani. He collared the man, called him a thief, and accused him of having stolen the vest, ordered the boy to run off and bring the conductor and Karuppen kangani. When they arrived the supposed thief was pointed out, and an inquiry entered into as to how Karuppen had been robbed ; but Karuppen soon explained the difficulty, and said he had not been robbed, that the vest was found not to be a suitable article of clothing, and so he had sold it to the supposed culprit for two shillings—it was all right. ‘ Two shillings ! ’ screamed out Mr. Fresh, “ why the vest is quite new, scarcely ever been on, and cost in England twenty shillings ! ” Karuppen now looked foolish, said he was a fool, but had been imposed upon and cheated, and would master please consider his hard fate in having lost money to the extent of eighteen shillings, and give him another vest, a better and warmer one than the one he had sold ! But Mr. Fresh was fast getting the freshness rubbed off him, and on his own responsibility, without even making reference to the conductor, positively refused even for a moment to entertain the very modest request. And it was much the same way with all the other articles of clothing which he had given away in presents ; whenever he visited a neighbouring estate or walked along the public pathway, especially on Sundays, he was sure to meet and see strange coolies wearing his clothing, and the invariable reply he received to all questions and queries, as to where they had got them, was that they had been bought for some trifling sum from some of his own people ; and the ultimate result of all these little experiences was, Mr. Fresh most decidedly refused to give away any more presents. Now, whether or not it arose from deep-laid plots and plans, resulting from consultations at the lines and working places, amongst the kanganis, or whether it was just a new turn in the kaleidoscope of native character, is not worth inquiring into. It is sufficient here to state, that as the people were quite determined upon getting presents, and the old method of asking for them being found useless, they adopted the very natural proceeding of introducing a new one, which was that master be forced—compelled—to give presents—to place him in a position that he must do so, whether agree-

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able or not; and so it was definitely settled, at a general conference in the chief kangani's room, that they must all MAKE PRESENTS to master, who thus, in very shame, could not do less than return to them a much more handsome present than he had received. One afternoon a kangani stepped into the verandah; under his arm was carried a fine cock. Now, poultry was one of Mr. Fresh's weak points, which very probably the man knew, as he had frequently been making inquiry as to where he could purchase some fowls. As a matter of course his eye caught the fowl under the man's arm, and from the glance of that eye the knowing kangani knew at once master was caught also. "What a very fine bird," says Mr. Fresh; "Yes," says the kangani, as he unties his legs and sets him down on the verandah, "Quite tame too, just a pet." The cock flapped his wings, shook out his beautiful feathers, and arched his tail, until master's attention became so rivetted that the kangani at once perceived he was fixed. He then said, "I knew master like very much, master please take and keep. My wife's pet fowl; she will be very angry, and make plenty row with me. No matter, master must get the fowl." Mr. Fresh was profuse in his thanks, and would the kangani take three rupees, to buy a new dress for his wife, and console her for the loss of the bird. But it was promptly refused; he did not sell the bird, it was a present. "All right," says Mr. Fresh, and went into the bungalow to finish up some accounts. On coming out nearly an hour afterwards, to his great surprise, the kangani was standing just in the same spot—had never gone—so was asked to state what he wanted. After great hesitation, after a good deal of pressing, he replied "A coat." Now, notwithstanding all the resolutions master had arrived at, he felt, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, that he must give this man a coat; he had taken his fowl, about which the man said his wife was very angry, indeed the subject might interfere with the domestic felicity of the couple, and the wife might even run away and the whole blame might rest on him. So he opened a box which stood in the verandah, the result of which was, the kangani took his departure, dressed in a new tweed woollen shooting coat, which had never been worn, the original cost of which was £3; and it thus happened Mr. Fresh got the present of a beautiful cock, worth six or eight shillings, and gave a present of a brand new coat, eight times the value of the bird!! Was not this successful schemer a grand man, strutting about dressed in a fine new English-made coat, and didn't he rise immensely in the estimation of all the women in the lines! The men were all extremely envious and jealous, and many

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were the questions put as to how he had procured this fine present. Of course it was all told. It was likewise related how the fortunate possessor of the coat had seen into master's boxes, and there were plenty more coats, just as good as the one he wore. That very afternoon, Mr. Fresh suddenly became aware that he had become a great favourite amongst the people, for they all commenced to bring him an infinite variety of presents. Bunches of plantains, plates filled with eggs, oranges, dates, cakes of jaggery rolled up in dry leaves, pounds of soft sugar wrapped up in very dirty blue paper, hoppers, coconuts, and all sorts of small articles, quite filled the table standing in the verandah, so that there was no more room to hold any more. They then boldly went into the room, placed them down on the dinner table, on the sideboard, and even on the chairs. The boy could not get the table covered for dinner; it was laden with, groaning under presents; there was not a single chair available, even the couch was occupied. But the crowning stroke of all was yet to come—the master-piece of policy—which was the head kangani, assisted by two coolies, dragging a thin lanky sheep or goat into the verandah, and tethering it tight up to the corner post. Mr. Fresh protested, that really this was too much, the sheep when turned into mutton would not possibly keep more than two days, if so much, and although he had a very good appetite yet the consumption of a whole sheep in that period of time was a good deal more than he could manage. But although he declared he could not manage the sheep, the head kangani and all his squad most successfully managed him. He was troubled no more, for his trunks were empty! But Mr. Fresh had a reserve stock. A very large chest with three hinges and two locks had been left in the rice store, at the termination of the cart road; as it was so heavy it was impossible to carry it by coolies along and up the narrow, rugged jungle path that led to the estate. So he resolved to draw upon this reserve stock, and to prevent any further spoliation just to take out a change or two for ordinary wear. It was a general custom in these times to make Saturday a sort of half-holiday, and it originated in this way, that all the able-bodied men were despatched to carry rice to the estate, and as the superintendent of course went with them to measure and issue the rice, it was not thought worth while to retain the women and children at work with no one to look after them.

So the next Saturday afternoon, when Mr. Fresh went to issue rice, he took his keys with him, and some men with bags to carry up clothes from his reserve chest, and replenish his empty trunks. The

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store was very dark ; it had only one door and no windows, but he perfectly well knew where the large box stood, and at once proceeded to the place : the box was there, seemingly all right. He felt it, and as his eyes got used to the partial darkness, there it stood covered with dust and cobwebs. The key is applied, but it won't go in. He sits down and blows into the key hole, until not a vestige of dirt or dust remains, but still the key is obstinate. He gives the lid or upper part of the box a good shake, and it falls off with a great rattle and noise ! Being quite at a loss to account for this he sends out to the nearest lines for a light, which a coolie brings and holds over the box off which the top had so easily fallen. Mr. Fresh gazes into the large trunk, the light shining into it over his shoulder, and gazes into an empty space : there is nothing in it !!

Even Mr. Fresh quite comprehends what has happened. The box had been forced open with crow-bars, locks and hinges broken, and all the contents stolen ! Not a vestige left of any, except socks, and natives you know don't wear socks ; they were no use to them, and they were too cunning to sell them ; that might lead to the discovery of the robbers. There must have been fifty pounds worth of clothes in that big box, all carefully arranged and selected by one of the principal outfitters of that period, who was Peter Scott, 9, South Bridge Street, Edinburgh. All enquiries and investigations as to who could have done this deed were fruitless ; the robbers escaped clean and clear with their spoil, and saved the rightful owner any more trouble and responsibility in giving presents. Probably it was just as well this extensive robbery took place for it saved the owner a great deal of after trouble. He was never asked for a present now ; even the lowest cooly could not have the impudence to ask his master for a coat, when he knew he had all his clothes stolen. If they had not been stolen in this wholesale manner they would surely have gradually disappeared, and given the owner a great deal of petty annoyance, as to who had taken them. So here at one fell swoop Mr. Fresh was relieved from all further torments for presents ; after he had given the half of his clothes away he found out that the other half had been stolen !

What an absurdity the old fashioned system was of giving young men on going abroad very extensive and expensive outfits. Their parents stinted themselves and very probably got into debt in order to supply the emigrant with a large supply of clothes ; little did they think what would be the ultimate fate of all these " fine clothes." It is the same way with a large stock of

wearing apparel as with a large stock of anything else, the stock gradually disappears in a very mysterious way; the owner is dressing in a hurry going off on some expedition, a button is discovered as being off one of the wristbands. What is the use of bothering sewing on a button on a half-worn-out shirt. There are plenty of good new ones in the box, so that shirt is tossed aside, and another put on. A small rent is on the sleeve of a coat, or on a pair of trousers; a minute or two with a needle and thread would make it all right, but the horse is coming round from the stables, may be even standing waiting at the door, and the easiest plan is to toss the piece of dress into a corner, open the box, and take out new ones. The boy gets hold of the clothes, and although he had no needles, and, even if he had, could not sew when master asked him, nevertheless he seems to possess a wonderful ability in tailoring when it is to answer his own private purposes. The clothes come home from the washing and of course several buttons have been smashed off. The washerman would never have considered his work complete without this little speciality; indeed if one watched him at his work standing in the middle of a stream smashing and dashing the clothes on a large round smooth stone, one would be very apt to suppose that the especial object or aim in his work was to knock off the buttons, and he was generally very successful, much more so than in cleaning the clothes; or if not altogether so, the partial success was as bad or worse than if he had been completely so, for small pieces of buttons, halves or quarters, would be hanging on by the original sewing, deluding the owner that they *would do* just in the meantime, but although carefully put into the button hole, they never would stick there, so the shirt was thrown aside, left to the tender consideration and care of the boy, and a new one taken out of the box, the buttons upon which were all right. The result of all this is that the young man who arrives in Ceylon with a very large outfit after a year or two finds himself hard up for clothes, and cannot understand where they have all gone to, or what has become of them. The writer has very often been consulted as to a proper outfit by young men proceeding to the coffee estates, and it has always been the case that they took *too much*. It must be remembered that both in Ceylon and all our other colonies circumstances have very much changed from what they were thirty years ago. It must be a very remote portion of the globe now where you cannot procure what is wanted for money, and—what is even better—*procured as wanted*. True, you will probably pay more for them, not get them of such good quality or so

neatly made, but, to make up for this, you will pick out suitable articles to answer the circumstances of your case and requirements, and having only a small stock on hand it will be the easier looked after and kept in repair, and all temptations to steal obviated. Of course, this opinion is merely given as a general rule, for there can be no doubt that there are small miscellaneous articles which can be with benefit taken out from home, but this is altogether dependent on one's private habits and tastes, and does not enter under the general term of outfit. On being consulted as to an outfit, our general reply has been:—"Take as few clothes as possible, and as many sovereigns as you can honestly and fairly lay hands on." You may find the former unsuitable for your position or calling—but not the most remote chance of your being so fixed with the latter. No chance of their becoming unfashionable and out of date; they can be kept in very small compass, in places where boys and dhobis have no right to intrude, and the best of the argument is, that the sovereigns can always command clothes, and bring their value in clothes, where the clothes cannot command sovereigns, and most certainly seldom or never bring their original value in sovereigns. All planters are aware of the very inferior quality of country-made shoes. We were once on a time sharp on this point—and took out a large supply of fine double-soled English-made shoes made to measure. They were all tried on before being packed up—even used for a few days, and were found to fit to a nicety. But it was afterwards found, owing to the heat, that the foot was enlarged and the upper leather of the shoes dried up and hardened, and the fine stock of shoes were all of no use: with a dozen pairs of English-made shoes and boots in the house—all new, made to measure, and made to fit—we were reduced to apply to old Jansz, the Gampola shoe-maker, to make as fast as he possibly could, for two pairs of common and soft black leather shoes, and to be quick about it, for that we had not a shoe to put on! For when one lives in a warm climate the feet get swollen and tender and smart under leather.

If any one steps into the back verandah of a bungalow, not far from Kershaw's bridge, he will see standing in the kitchen back verandah—at least a few years ago it was there—a large wooden box painted brown, well-fastened on its edges and corners with iron clamps. That box has been three times round the Cape of Good Hope. It has done duty in a gum tree slab hut, in the wilds of Australia, as a table; on its hospitable *lid* many a repast of boiled mutton has been served, many a tin pannikin has stood upon

it, into which was poured from the spout of a black kettle lifted off the log fire, that burned on the floor, tea and tea leaves all at the same time, for in these regions and times we scout tea-pots. A box of tea and a large mat bag containing coarse Singapore sugar stood behind it, and when tea was required a double handful was taken out of the box and put into the black kettle, a horn spoon dug into the bag of sugar, which it transferred to the pannikin. Tea and tea leaves were thus served on the top of that old box. It afterwards did many duties in many bungalows as table and even chair, also as servants' table in the verandah. Its last duties were where it was last left as paddy and gram box for containing horses' food. If it is not there still, it cannot be far off. Just step across the small walk and examine the quaint clumsy-looking old box. You will perceive the marks where the hinges and locks have been forcibly broken open, which was done thirty years ago when it lay in an old mud-wall-and-thatched-roof store at the foot of the Karagastalawa estate. The locks were never replaced, and in its last capacity as paddy box a staple, hasp, and padlock were used instead. If you begin to feel an interest in the box, and wonder if this can really be *the* identical one, shove off the gunny bags or any rubbish that may be covering its top, and you will see, right in the centre of the lid, a small oval-shaped brass plate screwed firmly in. You have looked, and see no brass. Call the kitchen cooly, tell him to bring chalk and oil, in a coconut shell, also a piece of flannel cloth, set him to scour and rub on the centre of the lid, for depend upon it there is a brass plate there. Now don't you see it beginning to brighten up? There is nothing like a good rub up for polishing up the brass and making it shine, whether it be on the face of a young planter, or on the brass or the lid of an old planter's box; rub away and be sure about it, for on that brass plate is carved Mr. Fresh's name!

The cooly is done, the brass plate is quite bright. You look and say, "This can't be the box, for Fresh's name is not here." What a dull fellow! We don't print real names in these reminiscences. What is the name of the plate? As plain, plainer than print, is engraved

P. D. MILLIE.

CHAPTER XL.

FURTHER EXPERIENCES OF MR. FRESH :

HOLING A CLEARING ; DEBTORS, DOCTORS AND DEMONS.

After an infinite amount of worry, trouble, and bother, quite a sufficient space of ground was lined so as to enable a full force of coolies to commence and hole. Mr. Fresh had been told that they could very easily open up twenty-five or thirty holes each man, eighteen inches deep and the same in diameter, but he kept this information secret ; he would not tell them the number he expected them to do, for who knew but that they might finish off thirty-five or even forty, or more, if they were kept in ignorance of the usual task, whereas if he told them the quantity expected to be performed, if anything at all was certain, the certainty undoubtedly would be that not a single hole more than the specified number would be cut. At the morning muster each man had served out to him from the end verandah, which answered the purpose of a bag store and general tool-house, a mamotie and crowbar, and with these tools shouldered musket-fashion the whole force marched to the bottom of the lined space on the new clearing. Mr. Fresh himself brought up the rear, as he judged it expedient on this very particular and important juncture to come out without waiting for or partaking of coffee and "roti." The kanganis did not seem to have the same interest as the master in the starting of this important work, for on looking round in order to give some directions to these headmen, whom he supposed to be immediately and respectfully walking behind him, they were not to be seen, and on asking where they had gone to the prompt reply was, "To the lines, to eat rice." So "master" had to start the work himself, gave every man a line of pegs to work on, and fully explained, as well as he possibly could—which very probably was not understood at all, as his limited knowledge of the language extended only to two words, "yes" and "no." By the bye, there was another word he knew, and perhaps a much more essentially necessary one than these two little monosyllables, one which was almost constantly in use, in spite of which little or no attention was ever paid to it, so that while essentially necessary in theory, it was always found to be essentially unnecessary, wholly and solely from an intense dislike to put it in practice. This word was "sureka" (quick). He held up both his hands with fingers well spread out twice, then one hand only, by which action even the very dullest of the lot knew that he would have said, if he could

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"Eravitunge," which means twenty-five—they were to open out twenty-five holes; but the bulk of the men seemed to consider this a very melancholy joke, and quite out of place, as they all gave a very mournful and unhappy smile, laid down their tools, sat down at the end peg on the allotted line, and looked very steadily and reproachfully at it. The kangani now arrived in great haste at the working place, as if they were surely going to do some great actions. On the state of matters being laid before them they raised a great shout, poked their long sticks into the ribs of the coolies who were sitting looking at the pegs, and called them lazy "pandies;" this word was repeated so often that "master" felt some curiosity to know what was the meaning of it; so he called the conductor and asked. The conductor replied, that it meant "pigs," that "pandy" was the Tamil word for a pig. So in spite of the very melancholy state of matters, Mr. Fresh could not resist his melancholy joke also, and said he understood it all now, for it was quite natural for pigs to sit looking at pegs. The kangani now got the coolies to stand up, pulled out the peg, and said, "With your mamotie make a hole exactly on this spot;" so the cooly threw aside his blanket on the top of a large burnt log, fastened his hair behind in a "gundy" or knot, bared his shoulders and the upper portion of the body, fastening the cloth in tight folds and rolls round his waist, took the mamotie from the hands of the kangani, firmly grasped the handle with both his hands, raised his arms high over his head, which supported the tool in that position, in which it remained for some seconds of time, so that a casual onlooker would be at a loss to know whether the man that grasped the tool intended to allow it to tumble over harmlessly behind his back or to let it fall with full force upon his bare feet and toes; but he did neither. He made a very audible noise in drawing in his breath, and as the pent up breath came out of his mouth again with a loud "wheese," down came the mamotie with great force and was stuck into the soil nearly up to its hilt in a mass of stones and roots. He lets go the handle, and looks at the kangani, probably awaiting further instructions. They were soon and easily given, and consisted merely of the long stick, the badge of kangani-ship, being again pushed into the ribs of our very energetic labourer, who began to feel himself somewhat in the position of the elephant under the goad of his driver. So he again seizes hold of the handle of the tool, presses it backwards, or from him, in order to turn up the sod, but his strength was insufficient; in this extremity his kangani feels bound to lend a

help, so applies both his hands also to the handle, upon which there was now of course a very great strain, so great that it suddenly cracked and gave way at a knot, right in the middle. Both the men of course also gave way and fell forward prostrate with great force, making a hole in the soil with their noses instead of with the mamotie. All the work was now stopped, if indeed it had ever commenced, and quite a crowd surrounded the two unfortunates; they were tenderly raised up, and securely set upon their hind legs, asked *where* they were hurt, not *if* they were hurt; but the only reply to all these touching and feeling questions was "Heigho, Swamy!" At last the kangani shewed a very slight abrasion of the skin on one of his elbows, and said he must go home, but was unable to walk, upon which nearly a dozen of his coolies laid hold of him and carried him off, nearly the whole of the labour force following up the sad procession, quite heedless of the shouts proceeding from master, that if the man was hurt surely four people were enough to carry him; and that forty need not leave the working place. The cooly, the originator of the scene, was examined and found all right, only he persisted in saying he was all wrong and would not be able to do any more work for a week; and seeing it was not his fault that he had received grievous bodily injury in doing hard work for master, his name must be marked down in the check-roll—he must not be put absent—and perhaps after a week he might be able to resume work. The bulk of the men now returned from the lines in very good spirits, saying the kangani was better; he had been rubbed all over with oil and laid down to sleep under two warm blankets, but in the meantime must have some brandy. Master must give, seeing their kangani had nearly lost his life in doing hard work and teaching them how to hole. So master went to the bungalow, poured out some brandy into a tea-cup, and hoped it would do the man good. After breakfast the messenger came back with the empty tea-cup and said the brandy had done an immense deal of good, so much so that the man was now sitting up. It was all done and he must have some more. So Mr. Fresh, remembering the intense relief he experienced after being relieved of all his clothes, brought out the brandy bottle, which only contained about a glassful in it, shewed it to the cooly, and said as this was all he had in the house he need not come back for any more, and of course he didn't; only of course he took away the bottle. The cooly who would not be able to do any work for a week was ordered to resume work; no excuses would be

accepted; even his very fellows declared he was all right. He replied he could not resume work without a tool: didn't they all see the handle of his mamotie was broken. He was promptly requested to go off to the bungalow and take his choice of a tool, as plenty were lying there all ready for use. So he walked very slowly away as ordered, and did not again return to the working place. Search was made for him everywhere, but he was nowhere to be found. Late in the evening a number of his fellows came to the bungalow in great distress; their comrade must have fallen down somewhere—killed by doing hard work for master. He did not appear at muster next morning, and the kangani said he had run away, and as a matter of course owed him a large sum of money. It was a curious fact that it was always master's fault when a man ran off being heavily in debt. It never entered into the heads of the creditors that what master did was merely an excuse, probably what the intending runaway even wished and was anxiously looking out for or purposely provoking. The saving, hard-working cooly, who had laid by part of his earnings and owed nobody anything, seldom or never ran away; he would gain nothing by this. Having no debts to shirk, he would lose by this proceeding in forfeiting the amount of pay due to him and by the loss of time before taking up work on another estate; whereas your runaway cooly, who is deeply in debt, has nothing to lose and everything to gain; he loses one, two, even three months' pay, which is just a small fraction, not worth taking at all into consideration, as compared with what he gains by getting rid of his creditors. It might be—no doubt frequently was—not so much the debt that tempted the runaway to abscond, as the interest he was charged upon it. The kangani would consider it quite in the usual course of business to charge the debtor one rupee per month for the loan of ten, which is at the rate of 120 per cent per annum! And this is even a rather low calculation; instances have been brought before the notice of the writer in which the rates charged have doubled this amount! The result of this deep-laid financial scheme frequently was that the cooly found all the savings of his pay went to pay interest of money so that there was not the most remote chance of his ever being able to discharge the principal. He was merely a slave in the hands of his creditor, and all his hardly earned wages were transferred from the payable into the well-bulged-out waist-cloth of his kangani. This waistcloth was like the "tailor's bag," tight and empty when it arrived at the pay-table on a Saturday afternoon, swollen and distended as

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the owner leaned forward, bent in with its weight, when he took his departure after the paying was done. It may be said, "Why was this permitted?" Any remonstrance on the subject would only elicit some very just remarks from the grand head official. He had advanced money on the coast; if the cash went into the hands of the cooly, he would never get it out of him; his wages must be arrested at the pay-table before he could possibly touch it. He, the kangani, was responsible to "master" for the whole of the advances, and such steps must be taken in order to secure them. The master would say no more. Visions of refunded "coast advances," which would no doubt take place to-morrow, flitted before his eyes—cash which would keep him well in hand until next pay day, and prevent or obviate the disagreeable necessity of any intermediate drafts, for there was but barely enough to complete the payments, and a batch of carts had just been loaded with coffee. The carters would require a considerable advance of hire, which could be met with these refunded advances. To-morrow came; it always does come very quickly when there is anything to pay! With the morrow also came the carters to receive their advance and sign the cart note. The cart note was duly written out stating the amount of hire on the contract, and as a matter of course also stating that three-fourths of the hire had been paid in advance. This the carters signed and stood waiting for their money. "Master" also stood waiting for the kangani, who had promised to bring to the bungalow first thing in the morning at least a portion of his advance account, but "no appearance was put in." The master gets impatient, even angry, calls the "boy," tells him to run down to the lines and bring forth the dilatory debtor. A very long time elapses, during which the carters retire and very patiently sit down under the shade of some trees; for whatever the faults and failings of cartmen may be, one of their strong points, indeed the chief one, is waiting for their advance hire. We yet well remember some of our first *attempts* to weary, wear out, the patience of the cartman, or disgust him, in waiting for his requested advance. His demand was for ten pounds, and he was offered ten shillings, being at the same time told it was all the money in the house. He said he would wait, but was told he need not. But he took his own way of it, and waited in that verandah morning, noon, and night, with a perseverance worthy of a nobler cause, until in utter desperation, or probably under some fascination induced by his two eyes staring and watching every movement and action, we would send off and borrow from some of the carpenters or masons the required

sum, and the carter went his way under a practical experience of the old saying, "Perseverance overcomes all things." But if he had known the truth, it was this : he got the hire in advance, which he demanded, not so much from perseverance on his own part as from a desire on the part of his employer to be relieved from the incubus or pest of his continual presence in the verandah.

The dilatory debtor, escorted by the "boy," now makes his appearance, and master at once knows the money is not forthcoming because the cloth round his waist is quite flat and tight. He at once says, "Master cannot have any of the advances," for all the money he has taken from the coolies must be sent off, or is sent off, to the coast to "prevent their fathers and mothers from starving." It cannot even be paid next pay-day, for the bazar man is very troublesome for his money, and was promised a settlement of his account next pay-day. The coolies must have plenty of curry-stuffs in order to cut proper holes, and very large ones too ; indeed, the bazar man had as much as said that if they could not settle the whole of his account he expected a portion of it, or no more supplies would be given, so that instead of paying up any of the advances, it was perfectly evident that more *must* be given ! And as "master had no money in the house," the dilatory debtor would take a cheque on the Kandy bank ; and if it was a Colombo cheque, the commission must not only not be charged, but allowed, and included in the cheque. Ten pounds was urgently wanted, the Colombo commission on which at one per cent. would be two shillings ; and if master had no money in the bank, an order on the agency firm would do for ten pounds two shillings. But the two shillings of commission must not be charged against his advance account, only the ten pounds. The dilatory debtor was evidently sharp at and well up to all the rules of commissions and discounts, having no doubt previously, on other estates, come through many experiences on these important points. Indeed so very experienced had he become in the diplomacy of finance, that on taking his departure from the bungalow to which he had been summoned to pay up a debt, he not only managed to escape paying it, but took away a further little accommodation in the shape of a Colombo cheque for ten pounds and two shillings, for which he was only debited ten pounds, the two shillings being charged in the monthly accounts as "commission on cash." Now what do you think the dilatory debtor did ? He looked at the cheque, or if, as was very probable, he could not read figures, got some one who could

to read it for him, and his reasoning was: "I am charged (whether I ever pay it or not is another question—I may be compelled to pay it—here he trembled and shuddered at the prospect of such a dire possibility) in my advance account with ten pounds, and for this hold an order for ten pounds two shillings; why should this two shillings be paid in commission? why should I not keep it myself?" True, he could pay the cheque to the bazar man in settlement of his account, the very purpose for which it was given, and it was not likely he would make any charge in commission, as he had heard him say the other day, he wanted to send money to Colombo, and this cheque would just suit him. But nothing was further from his mind than giving the cheque or the whole of its proceeds to his creditor; he intended getting it cashed himself, and reserving as much of its proceeds for himself and as little for the bazar man as could possibly be managed. How this was to be arranged required some degree of consideration. So he asks and obtains three days' leave to go and settle some debts. At sunset that very evening he starts for Colombo by some short cuts via Gampola and Kadugannawa, presents the cheque at the bank office, receives ten pounds two shillings, and thus saves his commission. He is four days away, but gives some plausible excuse as to exceeding his leave, which is accepted. A very prominent feature in some of the peculiarities of native character is shewn forth in this anecdote, which is an intense dislike and aversion to part with money when they have it in their possession. If they would only shew the same diligence and perseverance in earning cash, in what much better circumstances would "most of them be. The dilatory debtor would have his "pound of flesh," the full amount of cash, and also the commission, but never took into consideration the bleeding which attended the operation. Time is seldom or never balanced in the scale against money, their chief idea of time being to do as little as they possibly can in the way of work; and of money, not to spend it. The dilatory debtor did not appear at muster on the morning after his arrival; he was reported as very sick and unable to leave his room, just what might be expected after his absurd journey, which had been a very hurried one from a cold moist climate into a dry warm one, and on his return *vice versa*; likewise without any proper food, for he did not sit down in any of the numerous roadside boutiques and polish off a good meal of curry and rice; not he, catch him being guilty of this extravagance; he purchased cheap, over-ripe mangoes and half rotten

plantains, and drank dirty mud in a liquid state from a roadside spout, to counteract the bad effects of which he would have a good glass of arrack at wayside canteens, for although, when at home, he was a high-caste man—probably only said he was—and did not drink, nevertheless being in a strange country, and no one either knowing or caring anything about him, he would possibly take a few liberties which he would not have dared to take when at home and amongst his own folks; and he may be excused when it is considered that very frequently his betters are no better in this respect, perhaps (some of them) worse. Mr. Fresh ordered the sick man to be brought out for examination. After a considerable time he slowly emerged from a dark smokey hole in the wall, which answered the purpose of a door, supported by a cooly on each side of him, upon whom he leaned heavily. Other two coolies came close behind ready for any emergency, such as a sudden break-down of his bearers stumbling under the weight, and repeatedly saying to their fellows who bore the precious burden, “Pattiram paiyapattiram” (take care, slowly, take care). In this way, they brought him forth and set him down at the feet of the master, where the invalid reclined, groaning, moaning, and shaking all over. Mr. Fresh put his hand on his forehead, felt his pulse, and asked what was the matter; the brief reply was “kulir kaychehal” (cold fever, or fever and ague). He was ordered to the bungalow, which was close at hand, to have a *dose*, and all the coolies impressed upon master the necessity of giving “nalla marundu” (very good medicine). Mr. Fresh says never a word, but goes to the medicine-chest, puts a good heaped teaspoonful of ipecacuanha powder into a tea cup, fills it up with tepid water, and stirs it well about; this he makes the invalid drink, and after it is over also makes him swallow a pint of tepid water. After it was all over, he stood bolt upright, staring wildly, as if he was poisoned; he then all of a sudden finds the use of his legs, walking very nimbly round the corner of the verandah, and was lost to view, but notwithstanding it was quite evident he was not far away, because he was very well *heard*. The coolies who had escorted him to the bungalow gazed first at each other and then at master in great consternation, and said—“Ennaada?” (What is that?) Master said, “That is the fever and ague all coming out of his throat; now you just keep at a safe distance, and take care, when it is all expelled from him, that it does not take refuge and jump down your throat! keep away from him.” But, notwithstanding the warning, they would go and look round the corner, but very soon came back,

went to the other end of the verandah, where they stood behind a post with their hands on their mouths; but whether this action was intended to keep out the fever and ague or to keep in laughter, will for ever remain a mystery. Master now went into the bungalow, and made up some powders—it might be Quinine or Dover's powder—and gave them to the coolies, and said, "Takethemanaway tothelines, and give him one of these in some kanji water twice a day; keep him in his room well wrapped up in warm cumblies, and he will soon be all right." And so the dilatory debtor was carefully taken away from the bungalow in much the same manner as he had been brought to it. Two days after this the invalid put in at morning muster, and said he was all right. After the coolies were all gone off to work, he still remained, and said he wished to have some serious conversation with master, or to use his own words, "pesu konjam" (speak a little); to which the reply was, "See that it be only a little—'konjam konjam'—for I must be off to the work. So the dilatory debtor commenced his little speech, the pith of which was this:—For a long time past a big devil, called *Marai*, had been haunting the lines, tormenting the people, for he had taken a fancy to the lines and wanted to live there, but could not get any place, for the rooms were all inhabited; and so, when he (the kangani) went away in a very great hurry, so great that he had quite omitted to get some one to live in his room during his absence, "Marai" had seized hold of this favourable opportunity and taken possession of it, and so of course when he came back "Marai" was disturbed and very much annoyed at his presence, and had commenced to torment him. Master did not believe in these things, did not understand them, but it was all true. It was not fever and ague that had been the matter with him; it was all the doings of 'the devil Marai,' and he must be driven out of that room!" In order to do this great preparations were being made which were to be put in force on Sunday: First, a very great number of things must be bought, and master must advance more money—three pounds at the very least. Here Mr. Fresh flared up, and said, "Of course, this is always what everything is sure to wind up with—some more advance—but I can just tell you no money will be got from me for any such absurdities." So the man seeing that "Master was angry" had sense enough to go away and say no more. It was all told in the lines, and of course all duly discussed; and that very afternoon every kangani on the estate came to the bungalow, and said they had all determined to hold a great ceremony on Sunday first, and it was no use master saying anything, for

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it must be done. The result of all this was, that instead of advancing the moderate request of three pounds, which had originally been so gruffly refused, that evening saw another twenty pounds entered in the advance book! Next Saturday a great number of people were absent from work, and late in the evening they all made their appearance toiling up the estate roads to the lines, actually bending down under heavy loads, loads which if master had ordered them to carry during the ordinary working hours, would have created nothing short of a general rebellion all over the estate. They had likewise purchased some sheep, and so urgent was the haste, that instead of driving these animals in the usual manner they had tied their legs and slung the sheep over their shoulders with their tethered feet sticking out below their chin. By and bye, a few coolies carrying large earthen chattis or jars on their heads appeared, moving very carefully and slowly. This excited master's curiosity, so he made inquiry, as to what it was, and was told "Sarayam" (arrack). Mr. Fresh now began to have a glimpse of *what was likely* to take place on Sunday, and also what would be the certain result on Monday and Tuesday. For no chance of any holing: better go away and visit some of his neighbours. No, that would not do. In the event of any quarrelling or general disturbance his presence might be necessary. He would remain and, if possible, be a quiet observer of what was going on. Early on Sunday morning bands of men and women, from all the neighbouring estates, all dressed in very gay and brilliant-coloured attire, crowded into the estate. A band of trained "tam-tam" beaters arrived from Gampola, and another of "devil-dancers" dressed in a hideous and grotesque manner, with masks over their faces and long horns on their heads. And it was perfectly apparent that if eating, drinking, and making a great noise with drums and trumpets, would drive away "Mari," that potentate's power would soon be at an end. Mr. Fresh mused and moralized, and thought what an easy thing it was to drive away an evil spirit, if one's heart is in the work and he sets to work with a determined will, especially if the task is a congenial one, in accordance with and suitable to one's tastes and habits. We laugh at the absurd customs of the coolies, but are there not some curious customs, also in a more dignified degree, in a higher state of civilization, amongst ourselves? Are there not Christian men in our own country who serve and worship the great deity Mammon, or some other great "Mari," not at rare intervals but continually six days in the week, and fancy they have quelled the evil spirit by putting on once a week a

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Sunday dress over a Sunday outward demeanour, while the heart within is utterly unchanged, for there the great "Mari" still reigns supreme, although it may be in quiescent repose gathering up strength for the ensuing six days. They do not even attempt to drive him away, but, on the contrary, encourage him, foster, and increase all the ideas he suggests. "To-morrow we will do it." Nothing is further from their thoughts than to drive him off; and were he freely and of his own accord to take his departure they would be sorry and exclaim, "Marai! oh, Marai! come back, come back." The fact is, coolly nature is just a low, a very low type of human nature in general, in a very low state of civilization, or rather in an utterly uncivilized condition. Such were some of Mr. Fresh's ideas as he musingly sat in his verandah after breakfast. After a little he took a stroll out to see what was going on, and on reaching the lines he stood a little way off, closely observing all the orgies. A large temporary shed was erected in front of the kangan's room, made of light sticks and rudely decorated with stems and leaves of the plaintain tree; bunches of flowers were tied to light strings and hung in festoons all round the erection, inside which were gravely seated cross-legged, or on their hind legs, the chief dignitaries of the estate, as also of several neighbouring ones. There they sat, and spake never a word, in solemn state, in fitting solemnity, on this very critical occasion. A little way off some rude stones were set up to answer the purpose of an altar, in front of which several smaller ones were erected, meant to represent gods, or into which their gods were supposed for a short period to enter; or to state it more clearly, the spirits of the deities worshipped were supposed for the time being to permeate the stones. From this explanation the general reader will at once perceive it is a popular error in the opinion of many that these people actually worship a real stone or block of wood. It is not so; they worship the spirit whom their abjurations have called forth, and which these abjurations have called forth merely for a time, to be on the spot and hear the supplications of the devotees. We do not believe there are any races of people, however low in the scale of human life, who are so utterly senseless and ignorant as to worship "stocks and stones;" there is always some hidden meaning in the background, similar or somewhat similar to what has been explained, just precisely on the same principle and reasoning on which many of the Romanists disclaim the charge of bowing and worshipping before images, pictures and crucifixes, on the statement that it is not these they worship, it is the real personification of

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what they represent, that the human mind must have something material to rest upon, and fix its attention, that so long as the spirit is so mysteriously bound up in body or matter it must in all concerns, even in religion, have an apparent object to arrest and attract the bodily senses, which again, in their turn affect and fix the attention of the mind or spirit; and to prove this they argue, and so also would the coolies, if they could, that so long as the spirit is in the body the one is necessary to the other. What affects the one in like manner also in some degree affects and influences the other. There is no use in arguing this point; we all know it, all have had very practical proofs of it in many ways. Have we not often had our spirits stirred up to great emotion, on hearing a powerful and eloquent preacher? and had the same sermon been preached by one of inferior eloquence and style, it would have neither created nor left any impression, and so also just in the same way with sacred music and psalmody. How often have we heard of religious enthusiasm, which just plainly means the nervous system powerfully aroused and stirred up in temporary effervescence, without leaving any permanent beneficial effects on the mind and general life. The outward form of religion, without experiencing its permanent power on the mind, as shewn forth and proved in the daily life. Some sheep were now led up to the altar, and there, on the spot, were sacrificed by having their throats cut; fowls were beheaded, their feathers plucked off, and roasted on the spot; bottles and cans of arrack were laid down on the shrine; plantains, oranges, and various fruits were likewise offered up; and when their duty was all performed in offering the great Marai such a choice selection of dainties, they then commenced to eat and drink up everything themselves! As the cans of arrack became low, in proportion the spirit of the devotees became high; they took sharp knives, even pieces of glass, cut and wounded themselves all over. With vehement gestures and frantic shouts they danced round the stores and altars, tearing their hair and falling prostrate before them, exclaiming, "Marai," "Sami," "Hear us, hear us." They then got up, seemingly stricken with sudden madness, foamed at the mouth, glared wildly with their eyes, and uttered sentences none could understand. Mr Fresh now called one of the most staid-looking of the audience and asked some information, and was told these men were inspired, the spirit of "Marai" was within them, and all that they spoke was not their speech but the speaking of the god. He told them very plainly, he saw very well they were inspired, but not in the way they supposed; says

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he, "They are inspired with or by spirits, but it is not the spirits of gods—it is by the spirit called arrack. In fact the men are without doubt very drunk!" But the man smiled contemptuously, and said, "How can they be drunk? The arrack was offered up in sacrifice to our god, and he has accepted it, drunk it up, not as we frail mortals do, for their method of eating and drinking is different from ours; 'Marai' has abstracted all the spirit out of the arrack, which he has used himself, and in return has substituted his own spirit; so that instead of these men being drunk, as you in your ignorance suppose, they having drunk that arrack are filled with the spirit of the god, by whom, and through whom his will and wishes are made known." But any further conversation on the subject was now impossible; for the noise made by drums, trumpets and loud shouts and yells was so deafening, as to exclude all other sounds; and it was very evident that every "man and mother's son" of them were all inspired with the spirit—they said "the spirit of Marai," but master said "the spirit of arrack." A lull took place in the noises during the early part of the night, just at the time Mr. Fresh went to bed and to sleep. He thought it was all over, but soon found he was wrong; they were only eating rice in order to gather up strength for a fresh outburst. For the whole of that night the noises were kept up, and lasted till morning, when "daylight did appear." At six o'clock, the kangani came up to the bungalow and said there could be no work to-day, and master believed them for once, and said, "Very true, I did not require to be told this." The day after the orgies were over the dilatory debtor came to the bungalow and said, the evil spirit had departed, and he was quite well, but master told him he was glad to see the medicines he had given had quelled the fever and ague. It was very evident our dilatory friend had just made the report on his health an excuse for visiting the bungalow, as he hung about the verandah and did not go away. On being pressed to tell what was wanted, he said he had incurred a very heavy expense in driving off the devil, and he must have some more advances to pay it off. Ten pounds would do. Master now resolved a new line of conduct, which was to fight the enemy with his own weapons, so he shook his head and said: "I dreamed a dream last night; Marai appeared in a vision, and said, 'That man must be tormented, and I have great power over him so long as he is in debt. When that ceases, so also does my power; give him money, so that I may rule over him, and eventually kill him—keep him in debt.'" On hearing this, the kangani

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raised his eyes and hands, uttered a loud howl, and rushed away. But he returned in a short time and counted out on the table the full amount of his debt. The advance book was brought out, and he was told his account was balanced, he was free of debt. Mournfully and slowly he departed on being told this sad and heavy news. For no doubt his reasoning was, what is the use of having an employment, and a master, unless you can get advances of money? The next afternoon he returned, and said master knew he was an honest man, and paid his debts, and was to be trusted, and therefore having this good character and the spirit of "Marai" being completely quelled, in having paid up his old debt, there could not possibly any way arise evil results in contracting a new one. "Master must open a new account and advance some money." As master had a good idea that a refusal would result in a notice to leave, he gave it and gave in, beaten by the dilatory debtor, the experience of many others besides

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CHAPTER XII.

ESTATE ACCOUNTS; PAYING COOLIES; ESTATE ROADS; STICK BRIDGES.

It was getting on to three o'clock in the afternoon, and Mr. Fresh was still in his office, had been there the whole of the day. This room, specially set apart for his general writing and business transactions, was just the end corner of the side verandah, boxed in with planks; it was about seven or eight feet in length and six in breadth; at one end was a window, looking out into the back compound, and a door at the other, which entered from the verandah; directly opposite the window a table stood, which occupied the whole breadth of the room, and on this table were piled in great variety and confusion rolls of papers, accounts (of course unpaid), specifications of sawn timber attached to sawyers' accounts, printed forms of monthly reports, cart notes, rice orders, and all round the walls were suspended from rough nails driven into the planks, long pieces of brass wire with a plug of wood at the bottom. On these wires were slung a great number of papers, brown and mouldy with damp, and covered with dust. On the writing table lay the open check-roll, which Mr. Fresh was busy "doing up." On his left lay a ready reckoner; the pages where the rates of wages at 5d, 6d, 7d, were shewn appeared very dirty, while the

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eightpence and ninepence columns were perfectly clean, apparently never in use. Our practical readers of the present day will hardly be able to understand this, as the ready reckoners in present use shew quite a contrary appearance. If you don't believe it, turn up and see; but perhaps from want of habit, you will have some difficulty in finding the columns, or has the publisher and printer left them out, as being now of little use? They are there however, there when wanted, although for all the use they are, as well consign them to "the tomb of all the Capulets." The floor of the office was not only covered, but heaped up with waste, useless papers, discarded as having done, completed their work, so that any casual observer looking in would fancy "master" was sitting on a mass of waste paper; but he was not, he was seated on a rough three-legged stool, the legs of which, and his own also, being so concealed by accumulations of paper as to present this strange appearance. In these days none thought of, perhaps were ignorant of, the simple and easy plan of calculating the cost of the different works by decimals; they took the sum total of the check roll, the total amount of labor, and the separate amount, in each column of the distribution, and calculated it by simple proportion; all these calculations had to be kept in case the account did not balance, for, as a rule, there was sure to be always something wrong. The long, tedious calculations had to be gone over again, and the error was sure to be found in some of the last calculations, so that the time spent in revision would all have been saved had the last few calculations been overlooked, instead of commencing at the first. When Mr. Fresh's fingers became stiff, or his brain confused, he would start up, walk into the sitting room, take and cut up some cavendish tobacco, with which he filled a pipe, and call out to the "boy" for a fire-stick; but there would be no reply, for the boy had peeped through from behind the door, and seeing master was very busy, had gone away somewhere in order to be busy also after his own fashion. So Mr. Fresh went into the kitchen and poked his fingers into and amongst a heap of ashes on the cooking stand, where he with difficulty and considerable trouble extracted a small red ember, with which he lighted his pipe. He then paced up and down the verandah, absorbed in thought, and after his smoke was finished re-entered his office and commenced his work with renewed vigour. But he had not been long seated, when three or four heads were seen cautiously peering in at the side of the window, and then as suddenly withdrawn; after a short time the same performance would take place on the other side of the window.

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But no notice at all being taken of the performers, after a time they all stood boldly out in the verandah, right opposite the window, and gazed in with a fixed and steady stare. Now this is rather an uncomfortable position for one to be placed in when absorbed in calculations. So master looked up, and saw some half a dozen of kanganis earnestly and intently eyeing him through the glass panes. He shouted out, "What is wanted now?" but there was no reply: the gazing only became more fixed. He called out, "Come behind to the door," and say what you want, and be off at once, for I am very busy;" but they moved not a step, only leaned their chins on their long sticks, and if these glass panes were not broken through, it certainly was not from the want of being looked through. In fact this behaviour so irritated the occupant of the three-legged stool, and he became so nervous, that he upset the ink bottle all over the newly drawn out monthly account, thus rendering it in such a state as to necessitate the drawing out of another. On the spur of the moment he seized hold of a ruler, walked quickly out to beard the invaders, who seeing master coming out hastily with a stick in his hand, made a sudden rush and huddled backward; the foremost missed his footing in the verandah drain, stumbled and fell, with all the others on the top of him. Seeing this, master's temporary irritation gave way, a reaction set in, and he burst out laughing, and the kanganis on getting up and becoming aware that "master was laughing," actually laughed too by putting their fingers on or over their mouths. "What do you want?" says Mr. Fresh very sternly. "Holing done, master please come and count the holes," was the reply. "Could you not have said this before, instead of staring in at that window for the last half hour?" says Mr. Fresh. "And what is the use of the whole lot of you coming to tell me that? It does not require six men to come and stand before my office window merely to say two words, 'Holing done.' I'll be out directly; off with you now, or——" here he flourished his ruler, and the kanganies suddenly disappeared. Mr. Fresh again sat down at his writing table, but felt so very discomposed that he could do nothing; in fact, he was doing worse than nothing, making a great many mistakes, until at last in catching himself entering 24 days at 7 pence as 12/11, he threw down his pen, pushed away the papers, and closed the check roll with a bang, saying, "What a pest, just as I was getting on so nicely." If he had lived in present times, he would likely have called and bawled for the "boy," and said he wished the horse saddled and brought out immediately. The "boy" would retire and give orders to the kitchen

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cooly to tell the horsekeeper "master's orders;" the cooly would throw down his axe, with which he was busy hacking away at a large stump, in order to procure firewood, fasten his cloth, adjust the sleeves of his dirty jacket, if he had one, and make a rush towards the stables, from which he would speedily return, stating no horsekeeper was there. He would then be told to run out to the grass field, for he would doubtless be there, cutting grass; seeing the case was urgent, he would actually run. Arrived at the spot, the air would resound with shouts of "Mutto—yah-hey—Mutto—Doree kupradu—surika wa," &c.; but to all of these frantic exclamations there was no reply. He returns, and tells the "boy" he is not to be found, and at the same time master begins to shout out, "Boy, will you attend to my orders? Send round that horse." The boy reports the state of matters, and says he sent to the lines to see if he is there. The lines are a good way off, and after the lapse of a considerable time, the kitchen cooly arrives in a breathless state, closely followed by "mutto" in the same condition; and if that kitchen cooly had told the truth, which he did not and would not, he could have said, he had found mutto in Carpiah's room, to which he had resorted of course only to have a chew of betel, of which very necessary article he had run short. But as the heads of this tale are a brief statement of planting life in the days of old, Mr. Fresh did nothing of the sort. Few estates then allowed horse or horsekeep, and fewer superintendents were able to afford either the purchase of the former or cost of the latter. Even supposing they could, what use would it have been? Allowing that the state of the road, which led to the estate, was possible for a horse, which was the exception from the general rule, a horse would have been of no use whatever on the estate. The roads there were merely cooly tracks; when they met any obstacle in the shape of a rock or large stone, the road took a sudden descent or ascent down or up a precipice, in order to circumvent the obstruction; huge burnt and blackened "doon" tree logs lay right across the paths, which were surmounted in a manner which might be suitable for a monkey, and the way a passage was made over them was this. If the tree was unusually large, sticks fastened by jungle rope would be fastened up each side, forming a rude ladder, the rounded form at the top, where the ladders met, was cut away level with an adze; this prevented one from slipping on a wet day in shifting from one ladder to the other, and also answered the purpose of a short resting space after the arduous climb up, as also to compose the nervous system before undertaking

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the difficult and dangerous descent on the other side—dangerous because these trees generally lay up and down the slope of a very steep hill, and if one slipped on the wet or smooth surface of the log in changing from one ladder to another, small hope of freedom from broken bones, if you even escaped with life, for a slip on the top of that trunk would slip you down as far as it lay, and then with the impetus of course down the hill you would go. You would not reach the river in the gully below, as a black root or stump would soon stop the downward progress; but in what condition? We shudder at the very remembrance, having personally come through many of these experiences. Another plan of dodging the big “doon” trees was to creep under them! Possibly the large tree had a slight curve upwards, where it lay on the ground; in this case no ladders were required—we tunnelled below them! got some coolies with mamoties and dug away a quantity of earth, below the tree, so that we descended on one side, after a great deal of stooping and crouching got under it, and ascended on the other side. Many a hat, many a jacket, put on clean in the morning, when the bearer returned to breakfast, carried very vivid, or rather livid, marks of the tunnels under the “doon” trees. There was also another manner of topping these trees, which was done by cutting with an axe large chips in the trunk, on both sides, forming a sort of rude step in the log, but this was mostly used by the coolies, who are very apt and clever at inserting their toes into these niches, and skipping over like monkeys. It was hardly safe for one with shoes, which are almost sure to slip on the timbers, and then down the hill you would go, as before explained. Sometimes on coming to an unusually difficult and large tree to cross over, we have taken off the canvas shoes and successfully made the passage cooly fashion, of course having first put the shoes in our coat pocket. On one occasion, while performing this feat, or rather after performing it, on putting the hand into the coat pocket for the shoes, in order to put them on and resume the journey, no shoes were there! While clambering over the top of the tree the shoes had fallen out, had fallen and rolled down the steep hill, and were nowhere visible; and here we were fixed, in the middle of a steep new clearing, without shoes. To the general reader this may seem a laughable occurrence, but we hope he may never experience it. While many incidents of much graver importance than this have long been forgotten, this never has been. Without going into the whys and wherefores, if any one (European) wishes to have a direful revenge on his worst enemy—place him on

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the hill face of a newly-burnt clearing without his shoes. The well-paved crossings now in general existence over streams and ravines were altogether unknown; the general crossings in use were, "cross where and as you can;" if it was a wet day and your shoes and socks were soaked through, it did not matter, for your feet could not be wetter than they were. If the day was dry and hot, crossing the streams would cool the feet, and from the heat of the sun above, and the ground below, they would soon dry again; indeed, we have sometimes voluntarily subjected our feet to this immersion, and when it was quite possible and easy to cross a stream dry shod, have plunged our feet into a pool of water, and allowed them to remain there for a few minutes; for the time being it also softened the hard leather shoes, but only for a very short time, as the heat of the sun speedily dried up the leather, and rendered them much harder than before. But there was a very convenient crossing, which cost nothing at all, and probably is still in temporary use in some new clearings of the present time. An aged monarch of the forest, whose spreading branches had towered over all his fellows, when growing on the banks of some stream or small river in the rich soil adjoining which its roots had caught a firm hold, and the huge trunk had bended over in grateful acknowledgment to the rill that supplied it with nourishment; briefly, the lean of the huge tree had been over the stream, so that when it was felled it lay over it in the form of a bridge, the lower end of the trunk resting on one side, and the top on the other, so that without descending and ascending the banks of the river at all, one could walk across on the tree and escape all the very unpleasant scramble, and also preserve his feet dry. Our first attempt at crossing a tree bridge is still vivid in our memory, and it was this. Having mustered the coolies and sent them off to hole, we called the "boy" and asked him if that coffee was ready; the speedy response was "Yes, sar," which was sharply followed up by a very sharp and rather angry order to "bring;" but although the coffee was pronounced to be ready and the order was given to bring it, it was not brought. This dilatory state of matters of course produced more angry shouts, which were followed up by a hollow voice proceeding from a dense mass of white smoke in the kitchen, "Coming, sar." But the owner of that voice did not come; on the contrary, the breaking and cracking of firewood, and the noise made in blowing through a piece of hollow bambu, which was in use in the kitchen as a bellows, told as plain as speech that no

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only was coffee not ready, but the fire was not even kindled in order to boil the water! And if that "boy" was bullied, threatened with immediate and severe corporal chastisement if he did not bring that coffee, the probability was he would bring it, made in cold water!—and after you had bolted it, out of a sense of duty, and bolted after the coolies, half-an-hour afterwards the boy would have all the hot coffee to himself, and, of course, would drink it all himself with infinite relish. Not only this, but the rice-flour roti, which you had slightly bitten, and of course found was quite raw and uneatable, would be taken back to the kitchen, and after being properly fired, devoured and eaten up by the hungry boy. On your return to breakfast you would ask, "Where is that "rice roti?" it is surely well enough fried now. The prompt and ready reply would be, "Master went away in a great hurry, and did not call me to take away the things, and when I came into the room to see if master wanted any more coffee, master was gone, and the cat jumped off the table with the rice-bread in his mouth, away out amongst the logs in the clearing. I ran very fast after that cat, but could not catch. Master don't know what a wicked cat that is, and master always making row with me and say I steal" (here he turned aside his head, apparently quite overcome with emotion, and wiped the tears from his eyes); "But, believe me, sar, and I never tell lie: it is the cat. Whenever master rises from table, that cat jumps up and eats up all that is there, and if I take away the things in a great hurry, the cat watches me, and the time I am in the bungalow he jumps up upon the kitchen table and shelf and eats up everything, and then master blames me and says I steal." "Well, well," cries master, "What between you and the cat, either or both, false or true, it matters little, for the result is the same to me." Having no time to put off, away he goes for four or five hours' work in the new clearing with only a mouthful of cold coffee and a bite of raw roti, to keep up the inner man. But although a great deal of time had been put off in waiting for cold coffee and raw roti, master was in plenty of time! He need not have been in such a hurry, for he very soon overtook the coolies, which was at the big tree that bridged the stream, where they had all sat down to have their morning chew of betel. But on the appearance of "master," they all got up and crossed the tree, one and two at a time; when they reached the other side, they, of course, considered it a matter of duty again to sit down and wait until their comrades had crossed; but even

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after they were all over they did not move on a bit, they evidently considered it a sacred duty to wait and see the master safe across also. Now it is not at all pleasant, and very likely to upset the nervous system, when one is conscious of not being able to perform any action well, or perhaps unable to do it at all, to have a hundred eyes fixed upon you, watching every motion! If Mr. Fresh had been alone, he would not have walked over that tree, but would have taken a more circuitous and safer route. But the day was getting on; they were all late, and he was evidently expected to make the passage, so he boldly leaps up upon the felled trunk, just as if he was quite used to this sort of thing, and proceeds to walk across. Having safely reached half way over about the middle of the stream, he stops and looks down, and becomes aware that he is standing about twenty yards above a waterfall, the roar of which resounds in his ears.

The suction of the water below him towards the top of the fall was strong, and very apparent. What if he slipped? He gave a glance backward, and became aware that to go back would be worse than to go forward, because in order to accomplish the former he would have to turn round, rather a dangerous feat to attempt in his unsteady position. He could not turn round; he was getting giddy standing where he was, gazing on the swift whirl of water below, so cautiously and slowly he sat down on his hind legs, then with equal caution stretched out his hands in front along the trunk as far as they would go, then with his hands firmly grasped on the rough charred bark he brought forward his legs with a jerk until they rested between his arms, which were again stretched out in front to be again followed up by the legs, until the passage was made. After the final jerk he descended and all the coolies, who with such affectionate solicitude had been watching every motion, surround him: "Master is all dirty; get a chatty and bring some water to wash his hands. Master's white trousers are all charcoal;" and they pass their hands over the trousers in order to clean them, but having just a short time previously applied coconut oil to their hair, of course their hands were all grease, and thus it happened that master's trousers, which had been put on clean and white in the morning, that very afternoon presented all the appearance as if they had been made out of a piece of tarpaulin.

As time wore on the crossings of "cross where and how you can," began to be abandoned, and bridges were actually constructed, and they were erected

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in a very short space of time—a day or perhaps two days' work, quite sufficient for half a dozen of coolies to bridge an average-sized mountain stream! In these times, sticks and trees of all sizes and sorts were plentiful, so plentiful that they were held in no esteem, and actually wasted. If a building was to be put up, a fence to be raised, or bridge required, half a dozen coolies sent into the jungle close at hand would in a day or two have collected on the required spot a heap of timber that would gladden the heart of many a modern planter to see, and so abundant was the timber that little attention was paid to giving the coolies the required length and thickness. If the cut stick was found to be unsuitable for the purpose required, it was either allowed to lie where it was felled, and rot in the jungle, or, if carried in, was just tossed aside to be used as firewood by any cooly who chose to take the trouble of cutting it up. Little did the owners and managers of estates then think, that they would live to see the day when no sticks could be got for any purpose whatever—no, not as many as would fence in a small poultry yard adjoining their fowl-house. It was just the old story, so quaintly expressed by the old Scotch proverb—“Fill and fetch mair.” So they filled, or felled, and fetched until their eyes were suddenly opened, caused by the opening of the ears to the low murmurs and grumbling of the coolies, after being punished for bringing in a short supply of sticks. These growlings were “cambu illai,” (no sticks) “No sticks!” shouts the enraged master? What do you call that? pointing his finger towards a dense jungle. No sticks! Why there is nothing to be seen but sticks, wherever I cast my eyes; there are sticks everywhere, am sick of looking at sticks; but I'll stick you: I'll soon let you know and feel too that if there are no sticks in the jungle there are sticks in the house,” which fact was speedily impressed upon them in a very impressive manner, so impressive as to call forth a very impressive howl. But, as a rule, personally in our own personal experiences, this sort of conduct was meant more to frighten a delinquent than to hurt him; he howled from the effects of fright and the dread of master's displeasure, not from being hurt. The fellow who declared there were no sticks, on his return to the jungle, told the others that master was very angry, had taken a stick and given him a lesson that there were sticks, and that sticks must be cut and good long ones too. So, what do you think they did in order to propitiate master? Why they all set to work, and cut very long ones, fully one-half or three-quarters more than the required length, and the

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task was done; but the result was it took nearly double the number of coolies to carry the sticks that it would have done had they been cut to the proper size. But that was not the worst, for after they had been carried and found too long they were cut to the proper length, and the ends or pieces so cut off, instead of being preserved as likely to come in useful for some future work, were just pitched into the stream, and carried away by the first flood. Shortly afterwards master would have some other work on hand which required sticks, so he would exclaim, "How lucky! just the very thing; go down to the place where all those pieces of sticks were cut off, and bring them up." But upon inspection there was not one to be found, so a gang of men would be told off next morning to carry more sticks, with probably the same ultimate result as has already been described. "We must put a bridge over that river before the monsoon sets in," says the master to the conductor at morning roll-call; "send off a dozen coolies into the jungle to cut sticks, and mind they are good long ones, and as thick as my leg." The result of this very easily understood order was that the sticks were brought down about as thick as master's wrist, and one-quarter in length longer than the order given. The coolies, doubtless wished to make up for deficient diameter by a considerable increase in the length; on being found fault with, that the timber was too light in girth, in extenuation they triumphantly point out the fact, that they were a quarter length *longer* than the order given; this would probably, instead of appeasing, increase the wrath of master, seeing which the simple cooly would suppose he was not believed, and would carefully take from his waistcloth a piece of coir string which had been given him as the necessary length to which the stick was to be cut. One end of the string he fastened on a splinter on the thick end of the stick, walking along the side of which, with the other in his hand, the string would of course be run out before reaching the other end of the piece of timber; he would then pause and look up into master's face, confident of approbation, and perhaps with some sort of a feeling that now a favorable opportunity to ask for a cumblie or an advance either of or on wages. And it would altogether depend upon the general character of the master how he received this appeal; some would get angry, and beat or threaten to beat the cooly, and the cooly of course would be altogether unable to account for why he was beaten; and the report would soon spread, "Our master is a very bad master." Some would be unable to contain their

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laughter, and of course the cooly would consider he had done a fine deed, that he was a first-rate fellow: "master was laughing," "master was pleased"—he would ask that very afternoon for an old coat. Some would neither adopt either of these courses, but send the men back, keep them out till dark, until they brought sticks of the specified dimensions; others again would scarcely say a word, but tell the people to go away, they were all marked absent. But the best course to adopt in cases of this sort is just simply to *look after the coolies*; if you can't do so yourself, get some one whom you can trust, have all the sticks heaped up and examined before being carried, and if there are any unsuitable let them be there and then on the spot rejected, and the man sent to cut others. It is a very bad system to punish a cooly for having done, or after having done, bad work, if it can possibly be avoided, but sometimes however it cannot. There are exceptional cases: "Prevention is better than cure." Either by personal supervision or by a trustworthy deputy *see* that the cooly does his work according to instructions; if he does not understand orders, take a little trouble to explain them; he is endeavouring practically to execute them, and after a short time he will probably quite understand and fulfil what is required of him. A little tact in this way will be better for all parties—proprietor, superintendent, and cooly; to the proprietor it is no compensation at all to have the day's wage of a cooly to his credit and bad work in exchange. The superintendent gets a bad name. He does not look after the work, does not explain to them properly, and then puts them absent. The cooly considers himself very badly used; more than that, will perhaps suspect or hint to his neighbour that master had pocketed his pay himself! This suspicion on the part of the cooly used to be a common one in "the days of old," but not now. As a rule, it was quite groundless, and arose from this cause; a great number of superintendents were men of little or no education, so little that they could not correctly "do up" a pay-list, and as for proving it, as is invariably done now, such a useless (?) troublesome action never entered into their minds. The frequent results were that the pay-list was full of errors: those who were paid too much—had less rice placed to their debit than they had actually received—said nothing; or—what was more likely—made some mild protest that their pay was very short, and they were charged for more rice than they had drawn; but not being very troublesome, and master seeing the injured man slowly moving off, was but too glad to be set free from the disagreeable duty of

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overlooking and examining his account. But those who were actually in receipt of deficient pay and overcharged for rice, solely and wholly proceeding from a clerical error on the part of the superintendent, did not give him credit for an unintentional mistake, as they would without doubt do in the present time. They thought it was an attempt to cheat them for his own benefit! And thus it happened that they preferred receiving their pay from the hands of the "Periya Dorai," because, as the money was his, he could not be suspected of stealing his own property for his own personal use! But this preference for the "big master" paying them was very often found to be a very grave error, had they only known it. For the "big master" being responsible to none, just paid them what he pleased, and let them grumble as they liked; there was no higher authority to whom they could appeal, no "higher court" superior to him, who could set aside any of his actions; whereas the superintendent had his own character to sustain and uphold. If he had any sense at all, and felt tempted to be dishonest, his argument would undoubtedly be: "Of what avail will it be to pocket a few rupees at the expense of losing my good name and character as an upright man amongst the men? What if any well-founded complaints of short pay should be taken to the proprietor? Even if without any foundation at all, such complaints, if persevered in, frivolous although they might be, might injure my character as a superintendent; I must be careful and pay every man his just due." And so it was, as a rule, that plain honest John Smith took a great deal of time and trouble in paying; if he had no small money or coppers, he handed to the cooly small pieces of paper currency coined by himself with a pencil on a small piece of paper, written thereon—"Ramasamy, one penny.—J. S." When paying was done, all the small penny and twopenny notes were called in, the sums written down on a sheet of paper, added up, and the total amount handed to some responsible trustworthy man amongst them, to divide, subdivide, and settle amongst them at their leisure. Now, do you think the proprietor, Mr Big Wig, would take all this trouble and bother? Not he. He would boast of the short time it took him to pay, as compared with "that slow fellow Smith," who was always wanting coppers and small money; "If one man's pay was 8s. 6d., give him four rupees, and if the next on the list had 7s. 6d. due, why, give him four rupees also! And so on: the pay list would balance all right at the bottom;" and so also was balanced all the grumbling at the end. If the man who received eight shillings, instead of eight and six-

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pence, became troublesome, his fellow who had been paid eight shillings instead of seven and six would flare up and say he was a contentious and troublesome fool; "Master was big master, had given very good pay, and it was all right!" But we have almost unconsciously, and quite in an unpremeditated manner, slipped into a discussion on paying, which must be closed with the remark, let every one pay his coolies in accordance with his own system, the one which he has found to answer his own views best, provided—and provided only—he pays them their just balance to the last copper; recollect a penny, although a very small and trifling object to you, indeed no object at all, is a considerable sum in the estimation of a cooly, and even if it was not, he is entitled to it—it is his due—and none like to have their due withheld from them on any pretext whatever. How would an assistant like, when coming for his monthly pay of £8 6s. 8d., if indeed there are any now who would think it worth while to engage for such a very paltry consideration, to be handed £8 6s. and told to "be off," that the coppers were not worth notice. Would he not stick up for his eightpence, with sturdy independence, and say it "was his right;" and quite right too. But we are quite well aware, in present times, these remarks are quite unnecessary; they are made in order to shew what the general state of matters were in the times of which we write, a condition which was produced more from ignorance of all the rules of arithmetic on the part of the superindendent, and a desire to save trouble and bother on the part of the proprietor, than from any wish or desire to injure or defraud the cooly. The cooly's habits were not at all understood, his value little appreciated, chiefly because they were generally plentiful and easily procured, a state of feeling which extends to many other objects besides coolies. In order really to know the value of coolies, money, or anything else, you must have come through the sad experiences of suffering from the want of them! See the weeds growing in such luxuriance as even to conceal the coffee; see the full ripe berries split in the centre pulp, and the beans fall out; see the suckers towering up in rank growth, all that is seen of the tree above a wilderness of "Spanish needle;" and see a gang of miserable-looking creatures, with hardly a rag to cover their nakedness, a little distance off approaching your estate. With what eagerness they are watched, as they come marching on; you actually tremble with excitement! "Are they coming here?" "Can this be Mutto Kangani" who has been reported as having been on the road with fifty men for at least the last three months, but who in fact at that present

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moment is comfortably "sitting on his hind legs" in a smoky hovel at Madura, enjoying the funds of his large advances? They are opposite the turn up to your estate; they are halting. No; without stop or stay the approach is passed—they are on to some other estate. See all this and a great deal more, as the writer has seen and experienced; then, and not till then, can you fully appreciate the value of the cooly.

But let us return to the crossings, which were to be done away with in favor of a bridge. The assortment of sticks collected on the banks of the stream at the proposed site having been completed, the work was commenced and finished on the same day! The site selected was where the banks on both sides were steep and rocky; these were levelled away, and long jungle trees of about the thickness of a man's leg (cooly's) above the knee placed across close together, and the number so placed depended altogether on what the breadth of the bridge was intended to be—it might be two feet, but seldom exceeded four. After they were laid across and fixed in correct position a number of small sticks, about as thick as a man's (cooly's) wrist were laid across them, close together, with perhaps a nail driven in here and there to keep them steady, and the framework was up! Then, on the top of the sticks a lot of rough gravel was spread, brought up from the bed of the stream, which filled up all the open space between the sticks, and again on the top of this a whole lot of mud and earth was spread out, and the bridge was finished. After a time the centre way would get hollow, and slightly sunk, caused by the action of the feet in walking across, so that the rain water stood in pools upon it; this gradually created rot on the timber underneath, so that after it had been in use for any length of time it was hardly safe to walk across it, even although it seemed all right, apparently. But so indifferent were we in youthful days to the risks of broken ribs and bruised legs, that it was quite a common thing even to ride over these bridges. The first sign of the decay of the bridge would be a flat stone placed down somewhere in its centre: some one on walking across had made a hole, which was caused by some of the sticks giving way; he had withdrawn his foot in time to escape that occasion, and as a caution to others and a warning to himself on his next passage, had placed this flat stone over the hole. But this was just the beginning of troubles: more holes would break out, more sticks would give way, until at last the fine bridge was reduced to one solitary rotten tree, infinitely more dangerous than the "doon tree" bridge, because while you had a very much narrower space to walk over, you

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had not even the security, as you had in the case of the "doon tree," that it would bear your weight. At length even the last remnant would give way and necessitate the erection of a new one, in the same way as has already been explained. Sticks and trees were no object. "Fill (fell) and fetch mair." Just to shew how strong these stick bridges were, when well constructed and the timber fresh and new, a story may be told, which is still fresh in the memory of Mr. Fresh. This gentleman was one morning walking out to the working place along the imperfectly formed traces of roads on a new clearing, when he suddenly became aware, from the footmarks on the path, that an elephant had passed on before him not long ago. He slackened his pace, and proceeded with great caution; indeed he even thought of turning back, but didn't, expecting to come up with the animal at every turn of the road. On coming to a stick bridge, to his astonishment, he very plainly saw by the trail that the elephant had crossed it, and not a stick broken or given way! Now, the elephant is a very sagacious animal, and would not have crossed that bridge on any account, if there had been any probability of its giving way under his weight. We cannot say what steps he took to ascertain its security; no doubt he examined it in some way before passing over, for as long as you saw the marks of an elephant as having recently passed over any bridge whatever, you might venture to walk or ride over it with perfect safety.

There was once a stick bridge on a jungle road—no matter where, for it is not there now. It spanned a rugged, wild, and deep mountain stream, with steep perpendicular rocks which formed its banks, and many a time with perfect safety had we walked and rode across it. At first, we used to dismount, and have the horse led across, which was rather a difficult matter, but he got used to it, so much so, and no accident whatever having ever taken place, that we got bold, did not dismount at all, but rode slowly over it. But stick bridges are treacherous; they have been called "man-traps," and it may be added, "horse-traps" too. One day, on riding across, just as the horse had placed one of his fore feet on the platform of rock which formed a natural abutment, one of his hind feet gave way, passed through the stick bridge! With a bound and a snort the animal recovered himself, and we were safe on the other side just as the whole structure gave way: a mass of sticks, gravel, earth, and stones, tumbled with a loud crash into the roaring abyss below. The animal knew perfectly well that he had made a narrow escape; he broke out all over with sweat, snorting with distended nostrils, trembling in every limb, and ever after this event that horse would never cross a stick bridge! If that horse's *fore foot* had gone through that hole instead of his hind foot, the result need not be guessed; our bones would have been laid, if they had ever been recovered, which would have been doubtful, "to

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moulder in the forest glade." As a rule, these stick bridges were chiefly over small streams and rivers, while the large rivers were forded; but there was an exception in the latter case. It is seventeen years ago since we first entered the Pundalu-oya coffee district. At that time a stick bridge spanned the river at or about the present site of the bridge; a very convenient rock near the centre of the river served as a centre abutment or rest, so that it might be said the bridge was a double one, in two detached parts, separated by the centre rock, on which the ends of the trees were placed, as horses during floods were unsaddled and taken across with a rope round their necks, which was held in the hands of a man on the side to which he was crossing, just in the same way, as has been described in a former chapter, as the passage of the old Dimbula ferry. This stick bridge was only for foot passengers; and the peculiarity of it was, that you never could trust to its being there when wanted. it was so frequently washed away. Indeed it was just a matter of course for the residents on the south side of the river before they started on a journey, or before sending off coolies for rice, to send down to the river and see if the stick bridge was there! It sometimes happened that when the tappal cooly arrived from Ramboda on his homeward route, the stick bridge was carried away. So that a string was passed over the river, and the tin letter box slung across on it. But the hardest fate of all was, when the beef and bread coolies from Pussellawa arrived with their loads late on a Saturday evening, and could not cross! You have been on "short commons" for some time: never mind, you would have a good beefsteak on Saturday, and a bottle of "Bass" too. You might even have asked your neighbours to come over and have a social gathering, and of course they came; but the social gathering would have to submit to rice and curry and a cup of tea, for all the grub and grog was in the tin box, on the other side of the river. But, "it's an ill wind that blows nobody good." What a grand catch it was for the coolies at morning muster, at the old wooden bungalow on the south side of the river, near and below the present coffee store, when they were ordered to carry bags of coffee to Tavelantenna, if just as they were about to complain of some grievous bodily ailment and shew you their sore feet, the watchman at the bridge came running round the corner, and stood silent for some time in order to recover his breath after running at full speed up that awful road, covered with landslips, which winds, or rather did wind, along the side of the river. A bright gleam shot over the faces of the coolies; they knew what he had come to say, and put back the bags of coffee into the store before he spoke. When he did speak, the speech consisted of two words: very expressive, quite enough to answer the purpose, and these words were "*Pallam potche*" (the bridge is gone.) So instead of carrying coffee a score of men were sent off to scramble across the river wherever they could. They would manage it on some old tree, and they would cut sticks and timber in the North Pundalu-oya jungles for the new "stick

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bridge;" it would be all done in a day, and if it came a *spate* next day, it would just be gone again. We are of opinion that if an account were correctly gone into of all the expenditure in renewing and repairing that "stick bridge," of all the valuable trees and timber of which the bridge was always renewed, of the time, stoppages and detentions at that ford during the rainy seasons, it would pay the cost of a good many bridges; and that it was a turn in the times for the better, at least for those on the South side, when a meeting was held at "Harrow Bungalow," where the planters, in "solemn conclave assembled," resolved to purchase and erect a bridge, that Mr. Kershaw should be asked to furnish one, and that the man to look after the work, and see it properly carried out, *because he was fond of work*, should be

P. D. MILLIE.

CHAPTER XLII.

HOW MR. STALE PROPOSED TO BUILD A CHIMNEY TO HIS BUNGALOW—MAN-TRAPS—GARDENS—MINATCHI AND THE MARIGOLDS AND HER LOVERS—CASTE AMONG COOLIES—DRUNKENNESS AMONG THE WORKING-CLASSES IN CEYLON AND BRITAIN.

The facility with which sticks were always obtained induced and produced many a *stick in the mud* in more senses than one. Now, what do you think they sometimes made of sticks? You would never guess, so I may as well tell you at once: they made chimneys! Mr. Fresh—"What!" you exclaim, "Mr. Fresh again! We are sick of that silly fellow." Well, if you are, call him by his right name at once, which, if what you say is correct, is of course, Mr. Stale.

It was a cold evening in the month of February; the wind whistled through the crevices in the mud walls of the hut, which out of respect to its worthy occupant was called "the bungalow;" the walls, of course, were neither plastered nor white washed, and occasionally a large piece of baked mud would tumble down on the top of the writing or side tables, for there were no side boards in those times, and at every crash Mr. Stale looked to see if the half bottle of brandy and the cracked tumbler were all right, and if the ink bottle was not overturned, until at last he got up and put these articles under the tables, out of risk of damage. No sooner had he put in practice these very needful precautions, when a sudden gust of wind made the whole house crack and shake, and the room all at once became illuminated in such a manner as to throw altogether in the shade the dusky light

given forth from the old cracked tumbler lamp. He looked up, and saw that a quantity of thatch had been displaced, through which the full moon was shining brightly into the room. Not very cheering prospect, thinks he, for the setting in of the rainy season; the house must at all events be made watertight before the beginning of May, but it will cost a lot, far more than the crazy old hut is worth, for it is a far way off to the nearest patches of mana grass, and I don't believe the men can possibly carry more than two bundles a day, and it will take at least four hundred bundles to do it, and it is no use fitting up the cracks in the walls unless the house is thatched; it must be done. When this course of proceeding was definitely settled in his own mind, he did what many others have done, do, and will do, under somewhat similar circumstances—resolved that as the house would be under repairs at any rate, and everything in a mess, he might as well put up a fire-place and chimney, and the very idea of a fire made him quite warm and cheerful. How comfortable it would make the dreary old room look, in having a red ember glow, on a night like this, during the rainy season; it would be invaluable, and keep everything dry; he would even dry his own wet clothes, and not have them brought in from the cook-house every morning in a damp state, smelling strongly of smoke. His shoes also, what an uncomfortable thing it was to put on wet shoes in the morning, or to have them brought in from the kitchen *so dry* as to have become quite hard and brittle! So brittle, that in the very act of putting them on they cracked and burst! Besides, he was an early riser, and was always up long before the *boy*, and had great difficulty in getting his coffee, so he would have the kettle and coffee pot brought in at night, at five in the morning would blow up the embers in the fire-place, and make and drink his own coffee, long before the boy was up; and the best of it all would be, he would be sure to have it hot—he would take very good care of that. Why, the fire-place would pay its expenses in no time, for would he not be able to be out to muster the coolies half an hour sooner, and not even be under the necessity of going back afterwards to the house for his coffee. This would be a great saving of work and time to the proprietor, but see also what he would save himself; he would keep that black bottle which contained the coffee powder locked up, safe out of the clutches of the *boy*, upon whom the tables would now be turned, for *he* would now have to drink master's leavings, weak, watery and cold. What would the boy do? It might perhaps be

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productive of unpleasant results. What if he should feel deeply offended and aggrieved, and give fifteen days' notice to leave, should declare that it was far beneath his dignity to remain with a master who prepared his own coffee? But Mr. Stale speedily dismissed this unpleasant prospective feature of the case from his mind, with the mental remark that no great or important object in life could ever be attained, or obtained, if we were to be always held in restraint by some counteracting disadvantages, which might after all never happen, and even if they did, very likely would not be so bad in their results as the anticipations would have one believe. What if the boy did go away? Why there were plenty more, and even suppose he was left without any servant at all for a time, he would not starve, for a man who could make his own coffee would be quite fit and able to boil his own rice too if it came to a pinch! Yes; his mind was made up: he would have a fire place and chimney, and he would make it cheaply too, for a whole lot of sticks had been thrown out into the back ravine, behind the house, surplus of what had been used in its erection, and which otherwise would just go to rot, or be cut up for firewood. This idea took such a strong hold on Mr. Stale's mind, that after he "turned in" he could not sleep; there he lay, in a placid and pleased frame of mind, concocting plans for building the chimney, until at last, notwithstanding the bright moonlight shining through the thatch, the whistling of the wind through the shrunken mud walls, and the squeaking of the rats as they rattled about the rafters off which they rattled down large pieces of dry bark, which in their turn rattled on the top of the bed, without curtains, he fell asleep. He did not go to the expense and luxury of bed curtains in these times, but always, if possible, had a good strong top covering over the bed; it kept off dirty thatch or dry mud, which was detached by the rats, also dust and dirt which the creaking and shaking of the rafters dislodged. This used to take place to such an extent that he used periodically to clear up the top cover, off which was removed whole basketfuls of rotten thatch, dried mud, pieces of coir yarn, &c.; but the best feature in the bed-top without curtains was that, with any ordinary precautions, however much the house leaked, if it leaked all over, you could always be dry in bed! and this was a comfort, for, however much you may task and tear at either human or animal flesh, they will stand many a good tug and rug, if they have warm, snug, and dry sleeping accommodation; and the way in which he kept dry in bed was this. On

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being awake during a night of rain with something cold dropping on the face, the hands would be spread out, and surely you would very feelingly feel that the sheets and blankets were soaked with water; the leak in the roof had dropped down on the bed top, which in its turn then dropped it down on you: then, you were lucky if you had any talipot leaves in the house, but as this was rarely the case you must provide a substitute; and this was what had possibly been laid aside, in event of this very probable contingency: some old battered and tattered tops of paper umbrellas. You would get up, strike a light, and lay these over the top of the bed, so as effectually to stop the leakage and then go comfortably to sleep. Having slept badly during the first hours of the night, you would awake rather late, and jumping out in a great hurry the bare feet would splash into a pool of water on the mud floor, giving one a very practical proof of the ducking from which you had escaped owing to the timely use of these old umbrella tops; and the old proverb passes through the mind, "Keep a thing seven years and you will find a use for it." The ultimate and final results of all Mr. Stale's cogitations, both in and out of bed, were, that he could put up a chimney so very easily and cheap, that it was of no manner of use whatever to make any official request or representation on the subject to his superiors in office, and so, in the course of a day or two, large heaps of stones and dabs of wet mud were collected at the gable end of the house. There were no masons to be got anywhere, so Mr. Stale commenced with a necessary force of coolies to build the fire-place and chimney himself! He ordered up to the house a dozen of coolies who commenced to make a large hole with their mamoties directly in front of the house door into this hole they led and turned in from the spout behind the kitchen a stream of water; then four coolies with bare legs jumped into this hole, and jumped about in it; they caught hold of each others' hands, and round and round the hole they danced, singing all the time, "Nan, nan, nan, nai—nan nai," while another cooly kept shovelling into the hole quantities of loose earth, which in due time was converted into a sticky mud of the consistency of slackened lime. Then the mud in the hole became so sticky, that it was with difficulty they could draw their feet out of it, and the whole of their legs appeared as if plastered with red mud.

This was a sure sign that the proper working up of the mud was completed. Then the order was given for the men to come out of that hole; but when

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they attempted it, their feet and legs over the knees were found to be "stuck in mud," and they could not get out! "Swami, swami!" What was to be done? They were fairly fixed like birds caught in "bird-lime." They cried out to the man who was employed filling the earth in, and he stretched out both his hands for them to lay hold of and help them out; a cooly seizes hold of each hand and tugs away, but with the help of the ductility of the mud on the legs of the men in the hole, and the grasp of two men upon one, instead of pulling them out, he himself was pulled in, and, of course, the sudden relax of the strain sent them all "head over heels," sprawling in the mud hole. They could not even call out "Appa-a-a," for their mouths were filled with mud; but it takes a good deal of mud and dirt to choke a cooly at all events, the mud in that hole was not sufficient, for they all got up and did not even take the opportunity of ceasing from work and taking a rest; they seemed to consider it a capital joke, and resumed the mud dance and song. But the worst of these mud holes used for making plaster was, that there were so many of them, they actually surrounded the house on every side; and the reasons for this were that they found it cheaper to make mud just at the spot it was required than to carry it. We have even seen a mud hole directly in the pathway from the kitchen, which was crossed by the boy balancing a curry dish in each hand on a six-inch plank, which bent considerably under his weight, so much so as to cause some anxiety to the gentleman waiting for dinner as to whether that dinner would ever reach the dinner table. After the bungalow was finished these mud holes would still remain open; after rain they filled with water, which, owing to the hardness of the ground at the bottom of the hole, remained there a long time; and none require to be told what the condition of stagnant water becomes, especially as the holes of course became the receptacle of all the dirt and sweepings from the bungalow. Indeed, we have sometimes seen an old bungalow so entrenched by mud holes, full of water, as to give one the idea that it was fortified by them against outward attack, and that the holes very frequently running into each other were meant to represent a "moat." The occupant of the bungalow would, perhaps, suddenly become alive to this unpleasant state of matters, and order a gang of men to have all the holes filled up; and how do you think they did it under his own personal directions? They collected all the rotten sticks, roots, and pieces of old timber lying about, and pitched them into

the holes, and then on the top of this spread a covering of earth, say two or three inches thick. It looked all right *now*, but wait until those sticks and roots got rotten. Why, the bungalow was better fortified than ever! for it was surrounded on every side by a line of "man-traps"—and very probably the first victim would be master himself!!

He would be late for muster, or late out in the evening, and instead of keeping on the beaten pathway would cut it short on a short cut, and cross an apparently smooth level piece of ground. But the roots and sticks in the mud holes underneath were all rotten; down one foot would go over the knee, and, on making frantic exertions with the other, down also it would go up to the thigh. Never mind, the hands are still disengaged; so, spreading out the arms and resting the hands on the ground in order to obtain a purchase so as to raise the legs, down also go the hands and arms up to the armpits, regularly caught in your own mantrap, and nothing for it but to call out for the boy and kitchen cooly to come and help you out. What if they have gone to "the lines?" No; for a wonder, they are there when wanted. Rushing out of the kitchen—"Coming sar"—they raise him tenderly up. "Master, our master, is he hurt?" "No, not hurt, only very angry." A war is now waged against the "man-traps;" coolies are ordered up to clear out all the sticks, roots, and rubbish with which they had been filled; they collect stones, small and great, in baskets, and with these fill up the holes, which are then covered over with a few inches of earth, and all is forgotten. After the lapse of some time he sees one of his neighbours with a fine vegetable garden; seeds had been procured from England, and there were cabbages, greens, turnips, and even peas; he would have a garden also—why not? So coolies are put on to trench up the ground round the bungalow, but they turn up nothing but a lot of stones and roots, and he remembers the cheap way in which the mud holes were filled up. Another cheap way was to rake into the holes with a mamoty all the top soil around the bungalow, so that afterwards any attempts at floral or vegetable cultivation were complete failures; there was no soil, only the hard underground gravel left—nothing would grow, even common hardy shrubs were a failure, so that the surroundings of a bungalow presented a very melancholy and forlorn aspect, the only appearance in the shape of flowers being immense quantities of waste papers, and, of shrubs, the sticks and stumps of old coir besoms! But what is that just at the end of the kitchen? Is it a glass-house? It certainly is a pile of glass something; what can it be? "Well,

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did you ever?" Rows of black bottles, all heaped one over the other, resting against the gable end of the kitchen; what a very extraordinary place to have a wine or beer cellar, let's have a look and see what sort of stuff they contain. To your astonishment you find they are all empty, not even corks in them, and on making inquiry as to how they came there, you are told that is the way they stow away empty bottles. Now, these empty bottles by no means implied that master consumed a deal of liquor, for bottles were in use for almost everything. You got tea, oil, ghee, turpentine, all in bottles; but of course the most of them at one time contained liquors, and it is surprising, what with one thing and another, how bottles do accumulate; just let any of our old country friends try it, and keep all the bottles brought to their houses for all and sundry purposes during a series of years, and it would open their eyes. They go on a different principle altogether, for as fast as full bottles of any thing are brought in the empty ones are returned, but of course on the coffee estates this was never thought of, or, if thought of at all, it was found the empty bottles were not worth the carriage, for it must be remembered that all house supplies were carried on the heads of coolies, on journeys of many days. Now, what do you think we sometimes made of these empty bottles, to get them out of sight, and not be a silent reproach that they were empty and would like to be filled, as a reproach that they were considered jolly good fellows when full, and allowed very comfortable accommodation in the sideboard, but whenever they became empty were tumbled out into the rain and cold, as being utterly worthless and unworthy even of house room, however poor? Why, we used them to ornament our feeble attempts at gardening. And it was done in this way: an attempt would be made to lay out *grounds* around the bungalow; actually a small walk or approach would be made, approaching from the estate road, leading straight up to the front verandah; loose sand, stones, or rounded quartz, would be laid down on the walk, but still it had not a finished look; it had no edging, and the gravel would get all spattered about amongst the attempt at flowers, so a piece of coir yarn would be laid down on both sides of the intended walk, along which a trench was dug about the depth of a bottle. The bottles were then inserted into this trench mouth down, the earth filled in up to a couple of inches of the bottom of the bottles, which now presented a glittering line of beautiful blue edging, in brilliant contrast to the white quartz with which the walk was laid. And the best of it was, this edging required no trimming and dressing; there it was, a permanent one,

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a permanent warning not to step upon the flowers "Flowers!" Well, may you exclaim, for they consisted merely of those sorts that required no effort at cultivation, just such as would grow wild anywhere, and under any circumstances whatever, such as a rank species of marigold, which seeded and propagated itself, until at last the whole plot was covered and overrun with it, and some evening in desperation you would seize hold of a mamoty and root up the whole of this wilderness of marigolds, collect it in heaps, get coolies to carry it off and deposit it at the edge of the jungle, where it revived, raised its bright head, and in revenge for your cruel treatment deposited all its seeds far and near amongst the coffee. The coolies in weeding, unless under strict personal supervision, would not pull it up; the women, tenderly and with care, would pick off all the fresh full-blown flowers, and stick them amongst their hair, on their heads, until they sometimes presented quite the appearance of a marigold bush, which shone forth in bright and brilliant contrast against the jet black hair and face besmeared with saffron. Nor was this all: they would string the flowers on pieces of thread, and wear them as necklaces, and would also insert them into the large holes in the flaps of the ears, for want of more substantial earrings. But the lady must take care, great care, when decked out in this inexpensive decoration, for what, it might be on very purpose, the suspicious husband or jealous lover would purposely suggest, or assist in these adornments, on purpose to watch her, and sometime after would cast on her a stern glance, and say: "Minatchi, your necklace is all crushed; has any one dared to put his arm round your neck? Minatchi, your earrings are gone; who has been pinching your ears? who has dared to stroke your beautiful glossy hair, redolent with the sweet scent of coconut oil, for these bright marigold flowers which so thickly studded it are all gone? Oh, Minatchi, what have you been doing?" The lady would toss her head disdainfully. "Doing, indeed," she would just like to see the man who would dare to put his arm round her neck, or lay a finger on her head; and as for any one pinching her ears, why two could play at that game. The suspicious husband or jealous lover would then say, "Quite right, and as here we are two of us, let's have a game." The two would then commence their little game, and from the howling and yelling that ensued, one would be apt to suppose they had a very peculiar way of amusing themselves.

But the result of the game, however much it might go against the lady at the time, would ultimately end in her favour; and the way she turned the tide in her

favour was just what they all do when reduced to a last resource, to extremities. The tide began to flow in a flood of tears! and the roaring noise made by that tide was a caution to suspicious husbands and jealous lovers. As it ebbed and flowed, the sound reached the ears of master, who became very unsettled: "There they are," says he, "at it again; what a pest those women are." Before the words were well out of his mouth, Minatchi, with a loud yell, is prostrate at his feet, sobbing and panting, as if her dear little heart would burst. "Dear me!" exclaims master, "how very dreadful, what is to be done?" And he gazes in mute astonishment at the mass of heaving red cloth at his feet, then raises his eyes, and sees standing a little way off the suspicious husband or jealous lover looking extremely foolish and uncomfortable. Calling him, he is sternly asked to give an account of himself, what he has done; and the whole story is told. Master now reproves the man very sharply, for it is always the man who comes in for a "good wiggling"—tells him he is a green-eyed monster, tells him all the truth about the marigolds, how Minatchi had come and asked him, in a very polite and lady-like manner, if she might take some *pu* (flowers) out of the garden, to which he had responded, "Most certainly." But if these rows were to go on, he would allow no more. The man replied, he knew what master said was quite true; it was not that; it was the crushed state of the necklace that made him angry. How did it all become crushed in this way? But Minatchi, emboldened by the presence of master, now fires up, and says, "Karuppai was washing rice, and she said to me, 'Minatchi just hold my child for a little,' which of course, I did; the dear little pet was very lively, and pulled away at the flowers, pulled them all to pieces, off my neck, out of my ears, and seemed so pleased that I never hindered him, and shortly after, this *Kalada* (ass) comes up, and says, 'Oh, Minatchi, what have you been doing,' &c? and then he beats me." Here the tide began to flow again "appa-a-a-a," and the man comes up, tells her not to cry, and he will never do so any more; but the softer he becomes, the more and the louder the lady sobs, until master, now out of all patience, makes a rush at them. "Out of this with you, away you go, you pests, and see you do not come here any more to gather marigolds." So the couple depart, the woman sobbing and uttering low wails, the man, with his arm round her waist gently supporting her, whispering, "Darling, darling, don't cry." The darling allows her head to sink on his shoulder, and in this very affectionate posture they disappear

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round the corner, and master calls out, "Boy." "Sar." "Now you look out and see that none of the women come and gather marigolds." "Very good" responds the boy, highly delighted. And why? Just because now he will gather them himself, and take them as presents to the ladies, with whom, of course, he will now be a person of some importance; he will even make necklaces himself, when master is out at work, and take them to the ladies as presents, and of course he will ask and obtain leave to fit them on, and he will make them to fit and join just under the chin; and it would always take some time to do this, as also require a very close inspection, and he would never be troubled with suspicious husbands and jealous lovers; for how could they suspect him when merely, as in duty bound, performing a common place act of gallantry. And thus it was he became very zealous in protecting the garden: "No flowers, master's orders." So of course, just to hear all about these new rules, they would go into the kitchen, from which after a time "the boy" would come sauntering out, in a careless way, as if he did not know what he was going to do, but, if you watched him narrowly, he was picking marigolds! and he took a large quantity into the kitchen, from which after a time the ladies would emerge all covered over with the usual floral decoration. What a sly fellow that boy was; no doubt he tried them on, looked well that they fitted under the chin, but of course this is only a surmise. But the ladies would come to the kitchen for other purposes than flowers. Master would perhaps see a heavy shower of rain coming down the valley, and would suddenly recollect that he had some work to get through in his office, which he had entirely forgotten, until the rain put him in mind of it. So he came in at a very unexpected and unusual time, and sat down at his pen, but the noise in the kitchen was such that he could do nothing; it was quite evident they did not know master was in. The noises consisted of a general talking and laughing, and the constant monotonous sound, pound, pound, pound, of the rice pounder. He became so irritated, as to be on the point of getting up, and stopping the pounding, by pounding their heads, but just as he had come to this conclusion, the noises ceased and the boy came into the bungalow, gave a searching glance all round, and then went away, apparently satisfied that there was nobody there—that master was not in! After this master got up, and gave a few searching glances also from behind the chink of the door! and became aware that Minatchi was in the kitchen, where she had come for the benefit of the rice pounder, in order to clean her rice, as

also that there was a dispute going on ; and he distinctly heard the boy say, "You had better go away, master will be in immediately," and the reply was, "I can't go in this rain;" upon which the boy steps into the back verandah, and removes master's umbrella, with the remark, when he stepped back again, "Master will come in all wet, and make no end of bother and trouble about drying his clothes." Minatchi now came out of the kitchen, all enveloped in a red cloth ; her head was covered with it and just sufficient space left open to shew a pair of beautiful eyes, which, in contrast with the scarlet cloth, shone and sparkled like diamonds, and a pair of lovely small feet projected from underneath, with the toes quite covered with silver rings, and just as she gave the cloth a slight pull up before stepping out into the mud, the anklets, with small bells attached, tinkled in such a charming way that master was now becoming quite interested. As he stood looking through the chink in the door, the boy opens up the umbrella, extends it well over Minatchi's head and shoulders on the weather side, so well as to leave no protection whatever to himself ; but what cared he ? the fire in his heart kept him warm. His shoulders down to his waist were bare, as also his legs ; and out they stepped into the rain, the boy sublimely indifferent to the streams of wet that trickled down his limbs. "Minatchi, the light of my eyes, are you warm?" "Minatchi, my looking glass, are you dry?" In adjusting the umbrella he would bring his arm so as to rest gently on and around her neck, and as they passed out of sight master stuck both his hands into his belt, and had a good hearty laugh. When the loving couple reached the lines, Minatchi throws off her gay red cloth, and puts on a dry one ; she then gets holds of an old dirty one, and says "Rengan, my charmer, you are all wet," and proceeds to wisp down his shoulders and legs, until the wet is removed and circulation restored ; but it was not so much the wisping that tended to this result, as the whisper ! She then sits down on a small wooden stool, just opposite a stick fire, and with a piece of hollow bambu blows it up into a flame. The boy sits down on his hind legs, on the other side, and they both spread out their hands, close to into the flame, and there they sit, enveloped in smoke, gazing into each other's eyes. Tears begin to run down their dusky cheeks : can it be their hearts are melting ? or can it be—the smoke ? The boy suddenly starts up, and says, "Minatchi, my wife, your hair is wet." He sits down close behind her, with one hand takes hold of her long tresses, and lays them on the palm of the other, stroking them in a most affectionate

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way, pretending to dry them, for they are not wet, and they both know that very well ! The lady now says, "Rengan, your moustache is wet" (how did she know that, eh ?), and she commenced to twist it with her fingers, until it becomes nicely pointed and turned up. She then puts her hand into a hole in the wall, and pulls out a small looking-glass, about three inches square; this she holds in front of her face, and the inspection seems satisfactory, for she merely gives her cloth a pull up, under the chin, adjusts a stray lock of hair, by fixing it in behind the ear, and then hands the glass to Ringon. During the brief process of handing it, some other process must have taken place, for when he looks into it he sees his moustache is all out of trim, which necessitates a further twisting up, until the lady recollects that she has some bees-wax, and just allow *her* to do it, she will soon make the moustache keep in position, and not be always getting out of order on the slightest attempt at touching it ! So the boy becomes quite passive in her hands, sits quietly under the operation she performs, and she seems to understand it quite. Oh, Minatchi ! Now, "they say," or rather we have been told, that it is wonderful how time passes away when a loving couple are engaged in these foolish and trifling blandishments, but cannot say for certain, having had no personal experiences of this silly behaviour. After they had been sitting at that stick fire for some time, the voice of the kitchen cooly is heard shouting out, 'Appya Durai—' although what the cooly intended to tell him, or what the master wanted, the boy never waited to hear; with a bound he was out and off, round by the back of the bungalow into the kitchen, his turban and jacket on, in less than no time. "Coming, sar," shouts our rare boy, as he presents himself in presence of master, with as staid and composed a demeanour as if he had just risen up from off his mat. "Now, boy," says master; "I have been calling you for the last ten minutes, where have you been to?" "Roasting and pounding coffee at the far end of the kitchen verandah" was the reply—"did not hear master call." The kitchen cooly is listening behind the verandah corner, and when he hears the reply of the boy, runs off; he is quite prepared now for any amount of questioning. He knows what to say, anyhow. After a little, master calls for a fire-stick, which the kitchen cooly brings. While lighting his pipe, he says quite in an off-hand, careless way, "Where was Rengan, when I called him so often to-day? He was down at the lines, was n't he, making love to Minatchi?" "Oh, no," replies the kitchen

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cooly, he was never out of the kitchen, and was just roasting and pounding coffee, at the far end of the verandah. "Well, but," says the master, "Minatchi was in the kitchen for a long while, and he went away with her, didn't he?" But the kitchen coolie replies, swears, that Minatchi had never been in the kitchen at all, could not have been, or he would have seen her, as he had not been anywhere all day. "No, no, she had not been there, that was perfectly certain." Master now calls the boy, and says, "What have you been doing with my umbrella? it is all wet, and when it was placed by me in that corner it was quite dry." "I have not been in that rain," the reply, of course, is; he knows nothing about it, did not even know it was there, but he will ask the cooly. He disappears, and after giving the cooly brief, positive, and easily understood instructions, returns, holding him by the arm, and saying, "Here he is." Master asks him, "Did you take my umbrella?" "Yes," says the cooly, "plenty rain, and Rengan said, 'Run down to the lines for a coconut, borrow a nut from some of the people, for there is none for master's curry.' So, thinking master would never know, or, if he did, would not be angry, I just take master's umbrella for ten minutes. Master can beat, if he likes, but I cannot tell master a lie!" "Well well," says master, "but whose umbrella was it, that Rengan took to the lines to shelter Minatchi from the rain?" But the kitchen cooly replied, "Why master joke that way? Minatchi never would, and never did, come to the kitchen. It would be altogether against her caste. No, no, master please don't think anything like this." "Just so," says master, "it is quite evident that all your kitchen people are 'Jock Tamson's bairns,' no such a thing as getting the truth out of any of you"; and the cooly, who, probably in his official capacity of standing behind the door with a dirty towel over his shoulder, had frequently heard this gentleman's name mentioned, replied, "Jock Tamson durai teriyada"—which means, "I am not acquainted with the gentleman who is called Master Jock Tamson." The next morning, as master was passing the lines on his way to the working place, Minatchi was standing at the end of the verandah, sifting rice; she had an oval-shaped flat basket, which was held in both hands, half full of rice; she twirled it and twisted it round, quite in a magical manner, and by a process known only to herself quickly threw all the rice high up into the air, where it caught a current of wind, which carried away all the dust and dirt in a cloud, and the clean descended again into the basket without a single grain falling to the ground. She then with a sharp quick turn of

her wrists made the basket perform a circular motion, which caused any stones or grit to collect all on one side; these she picked out with her fingers and threw away. She was so intent on her work, that she did not see master coming (?) until he stopped and stood looking at this first-rate rice-sifting machine! When she became aware that he was looking at her, she attempted to conceal herself behind the verandah post, but, as she was of much greater circumference than the post, it only concealed her forehead, nose, mouth, and chin, so that her bright eyes twinkled upon master from each side of the post, and perhaps, only perhaps, for we don't know, he began to feel his heart tingle! In order to dispel this natural but not very dignified feeling, he ventures on a bit of "chaff" and says, "Minatchi, I will be out all forenoon, and I suppose you will be going up to the kitchen to pound rice; you and Rengan seem"—here Minatchi made some mysterious signs and pointed with her finger to a door opposite, made of jungle twigs and leaves, but master did not seem to understand and rattled out some more jokes about Rengan. As he passed on the mysterious door now slowly moved to one side, and a head, with a great thick black beard, peers out. Seeing master was gone, the head and body emerges and a long stick is in one of the hands; this is Minatchi's kangani, who had taken the usual liberty when master was away from the working place, and had come in to eat rice. Of course he had heard every word that had been said. "Minatchi," says he, "when I brought you from your home, your parents requested me to take a fatherly charge of you, and I have caught you in the very act, not only of allowing master to speak to you, but even of looking at him, and there is nothing for it but to assume my authority." He then caught hold of her by the hair, and applied his stick most vigorously on her bare shoulders. The woman screamed out so loud, that the sound very plainly reached master's ears, who had not gone far, and returns to see what is the matter, and of course sees the flagellation. Now, that master was always the friend of the oppressed, and when he saw this dastardly conduct, his wrath overcame his discretion; with a bound he had the man by the throat, with his other hand seized the stick, which he applied with great force on the back of the kangani, who now in his turn began to yell out; and it is a very curious fact, when a kangani is hurt or cries out how very soon a crowd of coolies collect around him. Master and kangani were surrounded by coolies looking very fierce and all talking at once; so that, finding he was in rather a critical position, he endeavoured to ex-

plain that no woman-beating would be allowed here. The kangani replied, he would stop this courtship in the kitchen, at all risks and hazards. But Minatchi had now recovered her self-possession, and said, "I am a woman of Vellala caste, and spit on the very name of Rengan"; here she spat on the ground with great force and contempt. "Rengan, indeed! Parayan—pariah fellow—the very shadow of Rengan would contaminate my caste." Master could have said something about a loving couple under an umbrella, but wisely forbore, as it would merely stir up more strife. This resort or appeal to difference of caste used to be a very frequent cloak to conceal many peccadillos, for although the general rule of caste was in a way kept up on the estates, still there it received a check and shock, and we suspect a good many caste prejudices were thrown aside, only again to be resumed on their return home, just in somewhat of the same manner as the old saying, which most of our readers may have heard, that our own people, on going abroad, "left their religion at the Cape, and on their return forgot to pick it up again." But we suspect the mere journey from the coast to the coffee estates is contrary to high caste prejudices—most certainly the mixing up of all castes in one set of lines, although in different rooms, does, although imperceptibly, give a blow to caste. But if one loses his religion at the Cape, and forgets to pick it up, he may recover it again, and not be thought anything the worse, provided he is sincere in his profession, and amends his life. But caste once lost can never be regained. You may easily descend from a high caste to a lower, or low one, but you cannot mount up from a low caste to a high one. In order to be high caste you must be born in it, and hence, in a great measure arises their dread of losing it. If a high caste man marries a low caste woman, he sinks to the caste of the woman, But if a low caste man marries a high caste woman she loses caste, and is *cast out*. Now, does not this sort of feeling in some measure prevail in our own country?—only, we call it *class*, instead of caste! The coolies don't understand the difference between the two words and won't believe us when told that we have no such thing as caste. It certainly is very difficult to distinguish the difference; a European, a man of wealth, high standing and position in society, marries a highly respectable working girl, and is cut by most of his friends, especially ladies. It is in vain for him boldly to state that this is a free country and he is quite at liberty to marry, to please himself, not to please his friends: he finds, when too late, that he cannot but feel that he is "cast out." A fashionable young lady, born and bred in "marble halls,"

makes a private marriage with a man she loves, and who loves her, private because it otherwise would not have been permitted. The man is considered by her relatives to be of a class (caste) infinitely beneath hers; she loses caste, and is cast out; her relations, even her parents, never mention her name and they do not even correspond. Again, high caste coolies will not sit down and eat rice with low caste ones, and high class gentlemen and ladies will not sit down and dine at the same table, or even in the same room, with low class ones. Instances in a similar way could be multiplied to any extent—but enough has been said to shew the reader how the coolies cannot understand, and will not believe that we have no “castes.” Some will no doubt say this is all wrong: it is not class, or caste, that is objected to, in the instances you have given, it is a want of education, polite demeanour, vulgar connections and general associations, a total want of general similarity and community of sentiment. Don't put it off in this way; in some instances it may be so, but not as a rule, you know very well. You have often read and heard of the unhappiness very frequently created, of the life-long misery to two young and loving hearts, of the couple, who equally had received a fully competent education, both in every sense of the word, a lady and a gentleman, whose union was positively prohibited and forbidden, because one held an inferior position in society to the other; was of an inferior class (caste).

But the reader may justly say, “Don't commence a harangue upon classes and castes, that extensive and varied subject in all countries from the pole to the equator. Give us a chapter about it at some other time, if you like; stick to your subject, or rather resume it. Why, you commenced a chapter upon chimneys, and we were under the impression you would tell us all about how they were built, but you have done little else throughout but rave about the loves and love adventures of a dreadful flirt called Minatchi! Come, pull up, and give an account of yourself what has this got to do with Mr Stale and his chimney?” We apologize and explain that it must have happened in this way. Having written at great length in chapter 31st on curry and rice, it was therein stated, that probably some remains of curry still lurked near the heart, or affected the brain, so as thus to vent itself all out! and just in like manner, it might be that the casual mention of the name of Minatchi may have fanned into a flame the latent embers that possibly still occupy a concealed corner in the heart, and thus have been carried away by the current of old recollections. Some of our readers may be going out to their work, and may have to pass the lines. Look out for Minatchi;

she is still there pounding and sifting rice. Stop and speak to her. We suspect you will be glad to have an excuse; she will probably turn round her back to you, and pretend to be very busy picking stones out of the rice pounder; don't be in the least alarmed about the possibility of a fellow with a big beard watching you from behind the door opposite. For of course we don't wish you to be impertinent, or even to joke. Tell her, a P. D. has been writing long stories about her, and laughing at all her queer customs, and he is actually getting them printed? She will lean her arms on the rice pounder, and her cheek upon her arms, gazing intently on the ground, as if trying to recollect something. She will then say, "I have heard of him; yes, he must be the same. My grandmother is often speaking of him and says, he was always particularly polite and attentive to her, as indeed to all the ladies on the estate, and never would allow them to be oppressed and beaten by suspicious husbands and zealous lovers. Is he married?" You will say "No." The rice pounder will drop from her hands, which she will clasp under her chin, as she exclaims, "Antamanai sakkai. Whatever does the man mean! Is he sick?" You will say, No, and that you suspect he is in somewhat of the same condition in which Mr. Perean described Mr. Easy to be, when he wrote to his own friend from Bombay, "Dangerously well, and grumbling at all the money spent on his estate, because he wishes it all to spend himself." Then she will suddenly clap her hands and say, "I know! for how could he possibly care about any of his own countrywomen, after having seen us?" Then you can say, "It can't be that, or he would not be telling all these tales about you." She will then fire up and say, "It is very well for that sweet pea (P) to crow, on the other side of the water, but just let him come out here again, and he is laughing at the rings in our noses, is he? just let him come back, and bring a few plain gold rings of different sizes, and he will soon find a finger to fit one of them. Come back, come back, sweet pea! Or is he afraid?" But enough of this nonsense; enough has been said to give our readers a laugh, but as our practical friends laugh, they will admit the very truth of the whole description, or "Minatchi" is much changed from what she was; and the habits of Asiatics are not so easily changed, perhaps a little modified and smoothed down, but fundamentally the same, as they were a quarter of a century ago—aye, or even a hundred, or hundreds of years ago—instead of thirty. There is one change however, and that is, freedom of, and free talk to, the Europeans. Such a conversation as has been above described between master and Minatchi, was not

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likely to have taken place then. When she saw master was coming, instead of continuing to pound rice, she would have run into the lines, and shut the door, or if surprised and accosted, she would never have answered him, or most certainly not have entered into a conversation. It is a generally recognized idea that Asiatic morality is on a very low scale, as compared with European, but we must take into consideration the very different state of society or social life in the two hemispheres. The inner or secret life of the coolie is no secret; he does not and cannot retire under the cloak of respectable outward demeanour; all that he does in private life, is very well known, and talked about. Then, consider their utter ignorance, and want of all education whatever, in many cases, somewhat similar to a docile-speaking animal, although we hear, the docile animal is now very much changed from the times of which we write, and if you now venture to lay any burden on his back in excess of what he has made up his mind to carry, he will kick up his heels, get rid of his burden, and yourself at the same time by "running off"! Then, recollect, how gangs of men and women were made to occupy the same set of buildings—of course, in separate rooms—but we all know these rooms possessed no privacy; one had only to pop out of one door, and into the other; every word spoken in an adjacent room was heard in the next, indeed in the olden times it used to be very frequently the case that the partition walls between the rooms did not exceed four feet in height. But, partition walls indeed! They often only consisted of a few sticks, with mats, or old bags, full of holes and rents, hung over them, but whatever the partition walls were made of, there was nothing to hinder any man, woman, or child, with the greatest ease, to clamber over them, look through the crevices, or carry on any amount of conversation with their neighbours, in the next room, and they had only to lift up the bag walls, like a piece of tapestry, in order to pass from one room into another. Many a raid have we made upon "the lines," when in want of bags, and did n't we somewhat interfere with and mar their domestic arrangements and privacy! But these days have long since passed away, and the domestic comforts of the coolie are now better studied and carried into practice. Now, as a rule, all that the European labourer does, in private life, is not known and talked about. They are not subject to this very primitive gregarious sort of life; they have their social privacy and domestic arrangements, apart altogether from curious eyes, and ears. There can be no manner of doubt whatever, that were European working classes, man and woman, packed promiscuously, or rather to please themselves as they liked, in buildings somewhat similar to those occupied in the olden times by coolies, they would show as low or a lower grade of morality, than the coolies did, or do. We have all heard and read of the evils which resulted in Scotland some time ago, from what was called, the "bothie" system amongst agricultural labourers; and if these evils resulted on such a small scale, what would they have been,

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had hundreds of men and scores of women been all packed in and huddled together as they were, in the old "bothie" system, on the estates? Our readers must at once admit, the state of morality, would have been as bad, or even worse, than even the coolie lines, or "bothies." Again, the drunkenness that prevails to a great extent amongst the Scotch labourers, in the same proportion, is unknown amongst the coolies. We have sometimes thought, if a few Tamil coolies were to be taken into the Cowgate, Canongate, or Grassmarket of Edinburgh, which are the abodes and haunts of the lower classes of working people, at ten or eleven o'clock on a Saturday night, when the "public houses" are shutting up, and sending forth their inmates, men and women, in all stages of intoxication, into the streets, what they would think of "master's countrymen and women"?

We are actually ashamed at the very idea, when we recollect the crowds of Tamils thronging the bazars of Kandy on Saturdays and Sundays, and a drunken man rarely seen, never a drunker woman. But what would the coolie say, if told what may frequently be seen in the localities above mentioned, on Sunday forenoons, when a congregation is dispersing from church, they might see, reeling, in the very front of the door, drunken men and women, using oaths and language rather calculated to upset one's serenity of mind on coming out of a place for divine worship! And to prove this is no exaggeration, herewith are extracts from statistics, on this subject:— "The number of persons apprehended by the police, in a state of intoxication, in Scotland, during the year ending 30th June last, was 54,000, of whom 21,000 were drunk and incapable, and 23,000 drunk and disorderly. A careful examination showed that 85 per cent of all classes of offences was directly and clearly the result of drunkenness, 10 per cent more might be added as due to drunkenness, although not directly, and taking 95 per cent, they had 1186 out of 1238 cases due to drunkenness and only 52 that were not. If drunkenness was driven from the country, they would have the best behaved people in the world. To cope with this crime they had in Ayrshire, besides constables in the town, 120 men, lock-up houses over all the country, warders, governors, and a whole host of people. The cost of their maintenance was enormous, and all for the purpose of keeping those persons in order, who had rendered themselves insensible to duty, and disposed themselves to commit crime. From a table, just published, in Edinburgh, during the past year, 7,627 persons were apprehended for crimes. Of men, there were drunk when the offences were committed 2187 and of women 1554, making a total of 3741. Over Scotland, there were no less than 60,000 people who died yearly from the effects of drink. There were 111,100 paupers in Scotland, and of these 74,000 had become so through drink, while one half of the suicides arose from the same cause," &c.

Then, if you were to tell the cooly, that very stringent laws were in force, in "master's country," and very successfully carried out, in order to prevent profligate women from assaulting you in the streets; and if it were not that these laws are strictly enforced by the police it would be

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hardly safe to walk out after nightfall, would n't he put his hands to his mouth, and cry out, "*Ap-pa*" "*Durai san!*" Asiatic immorality indeed! who was ever molested or assaulted in the streets of any town in Ceylon in this manner? Not a female to be seen out after nightfall, unless under escort of a man. Again, just see what occasionally "crops up" in the newspapers, in divorce cases, amongst the upper classes (or castes). Do not these instances lead one to suspect that a great number of similar ones may never "crop up" at all, or be purposely concealed, to avoid public scandal?

It is a well-known fact, that a high and refined state of civilization, when it is not supported by sincere moral and religious principles, is invariably accompanied by a high and refined state of vice; that as civilization and virtue increase, so also does vice, refined vice, all the more subtle and dangerous as it assumes the cloak of virtue, and walks, it may be, without being recognised along with it, whereas vice, in its natural undisguised state, has a hideous aspect, is seen at once, and pointee at, with the finger of disgust and scorn, by all respectable people, who, it may be, and of course only some of them practise genteel and refined vice privately, never even mention the subject, unless the subject be "Asiatic immorality"! "There you go on," says the reader, "the chimney is fairly on fire now!" Chimney! We had forgotten all about it! However Mr. Stale has surely by this time got ready to commence, and so, we will commence or resume the subject in next chapter, and the *we*, of course, means

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CHAPTER XLIII.

A NOVEL MODE OF CHIMNEY BUILDING—A *contretemps*: THE SMOKE IN THE WRONG PLACE—THE "BOY" ACTS AS A CONSOLER, BUT ADDS FUEL TO THE FLAME OF DISAPPOINTMENT—MR. STALE IN A BAD HUMOUR—ASTONISHMENT OF THE "BOY" AT HIS MASTER'S PERSPICACITY—EXTENSIVE THIEVING IN THE KITCHEN—THE "BOY" RECEIVES NOTICE TO QUIT—A STRANGE USE FOR A MOUSTACHE—"NALAKU VA"—"SECOND THOUGHTS ARE ALWAYS BEST"—COOLIES' COMPLAINTS—ILLUSTRATIONS OF PROMPTITUDE AND DECISION AND OBSTINACY.

A blank partition wall crossed the bungalow right opposite the front door, and against this, right under the ridge-pole, it was determined that the chimney should be built. A hole was dug in the mud floor, into which all sorts of stones, as large as could be found, were deposited as a foundation; when these reached the level of the floor a plaster of mud a few inches thick was smoothed over the top. Mr. Stale then got as straight a piece of stick as he could find, and a worn out old mamotie, minus the handle, of

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answer the purpose of a trowel. With these he marked out a space on the mud, destined to form the lower portion of the chimney and the fire place; the shape of the latter being similar to the inverted letter "V," the point being towards and touching the wall, with a perpendicular of three feet and a half; the base of the letter faced the room, the breadth of which might be about two feet and a half. He then marked out a square, round the letter, of about six feet, and within this the chimney and fire-place were to be built. Some coolies, under his own personal supervision and occasional assistance, now packed inside the square, stones large and small, with large dabs of mud instead of mortar, keeping the outside as straight as possible and leaving the inverted "V" space inside quite clear, for this was to form the hearth and fire-place. As Mr. Stale was not sufficiently skilled in practical masonry to be able to undertake the formation of an arch above the fire place, when the building was about four feet high, he got two pieces of ten-inch *wooden beam*, and laid them across; on the top of these beams, and resting on the sides of the fire place, he placed a number of straight jungle sticks close together, and reaching up to the ridgepole, slightly tapering up to the top, so that the sticks presented a form somewhat resembling a huge sugar-loaf, which of course was hollow inside. All across the outside of the sticks he nailed, in a rough way, any pieces of old wood he could find as battens, about four inches apart. The whole of this erection was then plastered in with puddled mud, until not the vestige of a stick was to be seen on the *outside*. He then got hold of an old rice chatty, or it might be, we are not certain that he was so extravagant as to purchase a new one, and carefully knocked out a hole in its bottom. This, he placed and fastened on the ridge-pole, on the top of the stick chimney, and the chimney then was complete!

Then, was n't he in a hurry to have a fire lighted, and test the result of this very cheap and ingenious contrivance? "Boy, bring some sticks directly, and kindle a fire." The boy, nothing loth, briskly executed the order, probably having a very correct opinion that if the fire was once established, it would save him an infinite amount of trouble in running to and from the kitchen, to supply master with lights for his pipe, which was one of the most unpleasant of his arduous duties, for no sooner did he spy "master" settled down at his writing table, than he also settled down on his plank bed, covered himself over, head and all, with a blanket which had been reported to master, as having been sent to the dhobie and fell fast asleep. But he could never calculate on enjoying a peaceful, uninterrupted slumber; it might be,

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as it often was, suddenly and rudely disturbed by a shout from master: "Boy, bring a fire-stick," and if he slept too sound, and did not hear the repeated call, master might, as he sometimes did, under the circumstances, rise up, come into the kitchen himself, find him asleep, and give him a good scolding. Hence arose the very great interest the boy took in setting agoing the new fireplace. So he promptly made his appearance, carrying a quantity of red embers in a broken chatty in one hand, and in the other, some dry chips of wood, the kitchen cooly following close behind, actually staggering under an immense load of split wood, and, with a loud groan, let it fall in front of the fire-place, as if the release from that bundle of wood, had relieved his mind of some very pressing and serious anxiety. The boy then squatted down on his hind legs in front of the fire-place, and placed therein the red embers; then taking a few of the dry sticks from the heap at his side, he broke them up into small splinters, in a very expert manner, placing them gently on the top of the embers. He then took a piece of hollow bambu, about a foot long, through which he blew upon the fire, until a flame was produced; in fact the piece of bambu, just answered the same purpose as a bellows in more civilized life only the noise made in blowing through it was much louder, and very nearly resembled the sound made by a broken-winded horse, after having been pushed through some unwonted exertion. Of course, this blowing sent all the smoke out of the fireplace into the room, until master ordered him to stop, as he wished to see how the chimney flue would act. Mr. Stale then stepped out, a little way from the house, and looked up, to see how the smoke was coming out at the chimney-top, but could see none; he then looked down, and saw volumes of white smoke rolling out of the open door and window, indeed so dense was the smoke inside the room that even the boy came rushing out, with his hands over his eyes, and coughing violently. Master looked grave, and disappointed, and said, "This will never do"; but the boy replied, "How can the smoke go up? Master know very well the mud is all wet. Just wait until it gets dry then master can see, it will be all right. Smoke not know the way up yet. Master don't be sorry."

All planters must be well aware of the effect circumstances have on the temper and frame of mind, how sometimes the amusing absurdities of some points in the native character will call forth a laugh and joke, and how at other times they will cause intense irritation and annoyance. And it can be easily imagined that just at this time master was in no humour to be amused. He had sent in his accounts, the expense

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of building the chimney was complete, he had even passed the remark as to how it had been so cheaply done, and so it would never do to open up the account again in order to remodel or renew it. He must just submit to the unpleasant after results of his own cheap handiwork, a plight in which many others have found themselves fixed in much more important affairs in life, than building chimneys! In fact he was in for the results of mistake, a bad bargain, the result entirely of his own actions, with none upon whom he could with justice vent his spleen, which for want of a vent burned all the more fiercely within. What a relief it is to the mind, what a softening down of the feeling of responsibility, when any error is committed, to have some one to blame! If it were even nothing else than to have acted on the opinion or advice of some one, "I had confidence in his opinion; he advised me," how soothing to a personal feeling of self-sufficiency, how it removes the sting of the gnawing self-reproach of personal incapacity: indeed, this sting is so keen upon the very opinionative and self-willed, as to become unbearable, frequently prompting them, in order to obtain some relief, to lay the whole blame of their failure in any course of action, if not directly, in an indirect manner, upon some one else, no matter how absurd or ridiculous the accusation may be. Even if they know it to be such, the feelings get vent, and self is vindicated. All must have frequently heard of, or met with some, who, after having made up their minds to any course of action, go about, asking advice from their friends; they not only do not desire, but have no intention of acting upon any advice, CONTRARY to their own fixed opinion. They desire, are in search of advice, to carry out their own views, such as can be fallen back upon in event of failure. "I did not act on my own responsibility; I took advice. I was not to blame, &c." Yes, they took advice, because it suited them, and was in accordance with their own opinions; if it had not been, they would not have taken it, and are just as solely and wholly to blame for an error committed, as if they had taken, or rather asked, no advice at all! "A man convinced against his will, is of the same opinion still;" and it may be remarked of a good many, that a man advised against his will, is still of the same opinion, "smoke not know the way up yet, master don't be sorry," grated harshly on master's ears, and he passed some very unfeeling and strong remarks, which reflected very seriously on the moral character of the boy's mother, but the boy said nothing, having probably some general idea that they were tolerably correct. He only put his hands behind his back, said never a word, and retired to the kitchen, apparently in deep

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meditation. Having sat down on his mat, and mused for some time, he said to the kitchen cooly, "I cannot understand how master knows all about my mother; will you believe it now, he has just exactly told me her true character! My mother has never left the Madras coast, and master has never been there. How could he have known? who could have told him? It must have been you. How dare you go and talk to master about my relations!" The kitchen cooly replied and protested, and master had to interfere and inquire into the reason of all this row. But the boy being probably ashamed of the discussion, said "He was scolding the cooly for not cleaning up the dishes." The cooly very promptly replied, "How could he, or any one, clean dishes, without a towel," and in a woeful manner held out, grasped in both of his hands a remnant, a small rag, of what had once been a kitchen towel. "What," cries master, "no kitchen towels. At your own request I bought two dozen from Packier Tambi, the last time he was here and you know that is only about a fortnight ago: two dozen towels all done, in two weeks! I'm not going to pass that; what has become of them?" As he was speaking, his eyes became fixed upon a towel tied round the kitchen cooly's waist, which acted as a support for another, *the crupper*. Master made a dart, caught hold of him by the handkerchief, which was tied round his shaven head, the handkerchiefs gave way, and revealed, not the stubble of hair, but another towel which encased his head, and which the handkerchief had hid. Mr. Stale, prompted by these discoveries, suddenly thought of several table cloths which had been missing, which he would be extremely sorry to lose, beautiful damask ones, which had been in his family for many generations, and which his mother had placed in a corner of one of his trunks, in case he might have a ceremonious dinner party; so he hopped into the kitchen, examined the boy's plank bed, and found that he indulged in the luxury of sheets, and after a great deal of investigation, for the sheets were as black as the boy's legs, discovered that these sheets were his lost damask table cloths, lost indeed. in all but the name, for no amount of washing could ever recover them from their utterly hopeless state of dirt, which just had all the appearance of having been steeped in oil, and then smeared over with charcoal. Hardly had he time to recover from the shock of this discovery, when his eyes caught a glimpse of some unusual looking shaped bags, standing in a dark corner. On examining them, they proved to be some of his linen pillow cases, now in use as store, or supply bags by the boy and his satellite. They contained a most miscellaneous supply of all kitchen com-

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modities, salt, salt-fish, rice, coconuts, and all kinds of curry stuffs, and master at once came to the conclusion, they would be of no more use as pillow-cases, for no amount of washing could ever take away that very peculiar smell, with which they were impregnated a smell which cannot be better described than by saying it can be experienced in its native freshness, in walking along the Kandy streets, where the bazars are situated, on a Sunday afternoon. But what is this the boy has for his pillow? More towels? No. Well did you ever see such a dodge? Two damask table napkins roughly sewn together and stuffed with dried moss, or short leaves. Where, then, will the discoveries come to an end? Oh, Mr. Stale, what made you enter that kitchen? Why did you do it! for "where ignorance is bliss 't is folly to be wise."

"How so?" the reader may say. "How can it be folly to expose and find out stealing and pilfering?" Just because it is no use, irritates and vexes one, without creating any corresponding advantage: in proof of which, master when rummaging about the boy's platform, or bed, suddenly laid his hands upon a much esteemed meerschaum pipe, stuck in a crevice of the wall. This pipe had disappeared months before, and had been long given up as lost, lost from the pocket, while scrambling through that piece of awful jungle. It had been regretted and mourned over at the time, but of course eventually forgotten, and replaced. All old recollections now returned. Here is the pipe, as black, as dirty and filthy as the skin of the thief. What use is it to him now? Can he ever bring himself to put that pipe in his mouth, and suck it as sweetly as he did before? In comparison to the finding of that pipe, the idea of having lost it in the jungle was a pleasing illusion. Not only this, but what memories and suspicions it stirred up of other articles supposed, and perhaps with justice, to have been lost! Most probably he did lose his pruning knife: it fell out of his pocket, on coming down the hill, after work was done, but he does not believe it now. A boy who can purloin a pipe will never hesitate about a pocket-knife. A strict search is instituted: the knife is not found, but a razor is! and as he had grown a beard for the last four months, and did not intend to shave any more, the razor was of no use to him at all. The boy would have been welcome to it, had he asked it, and thus it frequently was, that in searching for articles which you firmly believed were stolen, but were not, you would find articles to have been purloined, which were never suspected. Perhaps a good deal of tact would be put in play, in this process of stealing. The boy would secretly place away, in some back drawer or

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press, the article upon which he had set his heart as eventually to become his own. After a while, a great row would be raised, as to what had become of it. If the investigation promised to become rather hot, and too persevering, he would suddenly, in making diligent search in your presence, find it! and, if you were Mr. Green, you would highly compliment him on his sagacity, and perhaps remark to a neighbour, "What a first-rate fellow I have; what a capital servant, he always finds everything I lose!" But, if, after a time, you had forgotten all about it, or it was not worth while making a noise about, your domestic had not forgotten it was worth his while, and answered his purposes to make no noise about it! "Boy, a nice fellow you are: found you out clean, in having stolen my favourite meerschaum pipe," says the master, very bitterly. The boy denies, with much indignation, the charge. "Steal, indeed, master don't think this way; master know very well, all the clay pipes that come from Kandy, when they get old and dirty, are just put aside, thrown out, and a new, clean one taken, and master know very well, I always take these old pipes; master say take, and never angry. Therefore when I see the dirty meerschaum pipe lying on the book-shelf, I think, too old and black now for master, he is done with it, just in the same way as with the old black clay pipes, same as them, I will just take and smoke, or master will just throw away. I think master is done with the pipe, therefore take to kitchen, never think to steal." Now, the question remains open, whether this boy was most rogue or fool: his argument was sound and reasonable, but, we think, most of our practical readers will pronounce him to be part of both, not a very deep rogue, concealing his roguery under an assumed but very superficial and flimsy cloak of folly.

Mr. Stale felt perfectly aware that he was fairly let in for the results of a mistake, and like many sensible men, who have found themselves in the same position, in matters of much more importance than chimneys, as it was perfectly evident he could not have a comfortable stick fire, crackling on the hearth, he might manage to have a small charcoal one, which would give out a comfortable looking red glow, and emit little or no smoke, so the boy was duly instructed, during his leisure time, if he ever had any, to go out into the clearing, and collect as many large lumps of charcoal as he could lay hands on, and lay it up in the back verandah. The boy did not feel very sure if he could find time to attend to this order, but would try, only master must give him two coolies to carry the charcoal, and he would go with them, and instruct them as to the best

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pieces to pick up. "Why," says master, "I don't want large loads of charcoal; take a small bag, and you need not go fifty yards from the bungalow, for I'm sure if there is abundance of anything on the estate, to be had for the picking up, it is charcoal; be off with you." But the boy did not "be off": he put his hands behind his back, drew himself up, in a very dignified way, and said, he was master's servant, he was not engaged to do coolie work, and as for carrying anything whatever, he would not do it, only coolies carried anything, and if master thought he was going to do coolie work, he would not, he was going to leave. Having delivered himself of this speech, he turned sharply round, and retired into the cook-house, where he told the kitchen coolie that he was going away to-morrow, he could not remain with such a very bad and unreasonable master. A short time after, the kitchen-coolie comes very quietly round the corner of the verandah, and stands a little in front of Mr. Stale, twisting his fingers, and rubbing his toes against each other. There he stood, looking fixedly at master, but never spoke. On being urgently requested to state his business, and not stand staring there, instead of complying with this request, he told master, or rather said, what master knew very well, "*Appaya poradu*" (servant is going away). "Is that all you have to say?" replies master, "the information to quite unnecessary, I know that quite well." But the coolie has as yet only given vent to his preface, and after a great many contortions of his fingers blurts out, that the "*appaya*" owes him forty rupees, and master please stop that amount, when he pays him. Just at this juncture, two kanganis step into the verandah, and in a very excited manner ask if it is true the boy is going away. On being told that such was the case, the one says, "He owes me thirty rupees," and the other in the same way stated, he also owed him twenty. While they were yet speaking, a number of coolies came running up, all making eager inquiry if the boy was leaving, as he owed them all, separately, various small sums ranging from four to ten rupees, and would master please stop all this out of his pay. Mr. Stale told them it was quite impossible, for really he had very little to receive, as he was always getting advances, but he would look and see, which he did, and told them that in event of the boy going away to-morrow, which he had given notice to do, the balance of pay due him after deducting all his advances, would be only about fifteen shillings. The disappointed creditors gazed upon each other in astonishment, and blank dismay, then they commenced to whisper amongst themselves, after which

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they all made a sudden dart into the kitchen, where they remained for a considerable time. What the conference was all about, what the ultimate decision finally determined upon, was, never came to light. For when they came out, they walked quietly away, and said nothing. A short time after they were gone, the boy stepped into the verandah, where Mr Stale was sitting, stood up right in front of him and boldly said, "I am a fool." Master merely looked up and told him to go away—he neither required nor desired any information on this subject, upon which the boy slowly retired, looking sorrowful,

The next morning, after coffee was served, Mr Stale told his servant to remain, he opened a small account book, explained to him the state of his account, and handed him the balance of fifteen shillings. He took it, and, after eyeing it in a mournful way, placed it down on the table, but said never a word; he clasped his hand in front, and looked fixedly on the ground. He then looked his master full in the face, pressed the knuckles of his fists into his eyes so very forcibly, as to force out a deal of water which trickled down his cheeks in the form of tears, and in a trembling tone of voice, declared, that he could not leave master. The kitchen coolie did not understand how to make proper curry, master would have no proper food, master would get sick, and all the blame would be his; no he might desert his old blind father, he might leave his aged mother to starve, but to leave his own master with only that kitchen coolie to prepare his food, was what he would never do; he was bad enough, but his character was not so gone as to do this. Master now began to have a pretty correct idea of how the wind lay, and was very glad of it, for of all the unpleasant pests that beset the planter, one of the most uncomfortable, is being left without a servant, with only a raw ignorant coolie in the kitchen, but at the same time he had sense enough, not only to conceal his satisfaction, but to assume dubious manner, as if this arrangement was not exactly in accordance with his own plans. He had before gone through all the sad experiences of "no servant got," and had no desire for their return. He had had his morning coffee served with more ground than liquid in it, and floating on the top of the cup were large pieces of bruised coffee, so that he used to say, if it had not been for his moustache, that coffee would not be fit for drink, for his moustache acted as a very good sieve or strainer, through which the coffee filtered, leaving all the grounds attached to it. After his couple of cups were finished, the table napkin with which he had occasionally to clean the strainer, was so covered with lumps and grains of the powder, or

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rather shot, that he used to remark, if his washer-man was a knowing hand, and shook out all those table napkins before commencing to wash them, collecting all those pieces of bruised coffee, and putting them again carefully through the pounder, he would have his coffee for nothing. So, after having come through all these experiences, and great many more similar we can well conceive the satisfaction which master felt on the prospect of his boy remaining, but he did not shew it: it would never do to let his servant know, if he could possibly help it, that he was in the least annoyed at the prospect of his going away. This would just be letting the boy have the whip hand over him, so that whenever there was any occasion to find fault, he would get sulky and give notice, and it is neither pleasant nor comfortable for a master, in any position whatever, to be continually held in check by threats from his subordinates which might or might not be carried into execution just as they please themselves. So he told him, on no account, to remain, on account of putting master to any trouble, for he knew of a very good man whom he could get in a couple of days (he did n't), so he need not at all distress himself on this point. In the meantime, however, he would think over it, and let him know to-morrow. "*Nalaku va*" (come to-morrow).

All our thoughtful planters must be well-aware of the extreme value of these two words in dealing with the coolie character; they exactly correspond in meaning with our own pity national remark, "Sleep over it," for of course when he comes to-morrow, if he does come, he has slept over it, and that act even amongst ourselves most frequently induces a very different course of action, if any action at all, than if we or they had acted on a first original impulse and it is also a fact, that when one has any subject whatever under consideration the first original impulse or impression in the morning, when the brain is rested, fresh and vigorous, is generally a cool, calm, and correct one; we even wonder at the conclusion we had come to the night before, when under the influence of passion, irritation, or excitement, and dismiss it altogether from the mind, wonder how dull we must have been not to have grasped this aspect of the case before. We dare say many of our friends, sitting, poring over their accounts at night, puzzling themselves to find out some error which obstinately refuses to come to light, have felt exceedingly annoyed. They won't go to bed, they are not to be beaten, a fresh candle or more oil is brought, and the midnight lamp is trimmed; they become irritated, nervous and stupid, give it up. Shut up your books, take a turn up

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and down the verandah, and sooth your irritation with a pipe, turn in and think no more about it. Very probably on setting to next morning, you will at once discover the error and be surprised at your own stupidity during the night before. This is just an apt and correct definition practically applied to yourself, of "*Nalaku va*" (come to-morrow). Not nearly "thirty years ago" we had a jolly good fellow as a neighbour, who has now gone to that "bourne from which none return," an excellent kind-hearted fellow was he, but, like many good hearted fellows, rather quick and irritable in temper. One afternoon he rode hurriedly up to our bungalow, flung the reins to his horsekeeper and sternly entered the verandah, where we were standing to receive him. In his right hand he grasped a heavy hunting whip which he nervously twitched, letting down its lash and giving it a slight flourish. Our stretched-out hand of friendship was not taken, on the contrary, his hand which held the whip was *whipped* behind the back. He drew himself gravely up and said, "Brown has told me that Smith told him, who heard it as a fact from Jones, because Jones heard it direct from Black, who said that you had told him that I had said ———. So you see, it is all traced, and I demand an explanation." Here the hunting whip became somewhat agitated. Our wrath began to gather up. What! we thought, bearded and threatened in our own bungalow, and we gave a quick glance, made a motion to our own hunting whip which hung in quite an inviting manner on the elk horns attached to the verandah post, but it was only a glance, the motion was not followed up. We clenched our teeth and kept down the rising temper: in fact, the motion of the hand now was in a very different direction, it was put within our hasty friend's arm, the arm that held the whip—and we gently drew him into the room, saying, "Come along and talk it over, and have a glass of beer!" So, we talked it over, and the result was, mind you, even *before* the beer was touched, a hearty apology from our friend and an excessive shaking of hands. He was quite sure his trusty neighbour and old friend would never have been guilty of such mean, low gossiping, he was a fool ever to have entertained the idea, would we excuse him, forget all about it, he had been altogether too hasty, &c.; and ever after that time, we were greater friends than ever. This is another definition of "*Nalaku va*." Just think how very different the result of this "*tiff*" would have proved had our hand even touched the whip that hung on the elk horns! How much happier a life would many

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of our planters lead in small districts where idle talk and tattle is sometimes too prevalent, not so much from any ill feeling, as just merely for the sake of something to talk about. If they would just amongst themselves put in practice, what doubtless they often tell their coolies *Nalaku va*, sleep over it. We had once an esteemed superintendent, under our own personal supervision, from whom we learned this hint. We used to be always (as *periya durai*) pestered and tormented with all sorts of silly complaints from the coolies, requiring, in their own estimation, urgent and immediate settlement. We could never properly settle anything, even after taking great trouble, and just for this reason, that when the people came, on the spur of the moment, under great excitement, we at once entered into their case, and attempted unsuccessfully to reason with people who were absurdly unreasonable. Quite in desperation. Not knowing what to do, and just merely to get rid of the pests, we would say "Go to the *sinna durai*; he has orders from us to settle all your disputes," until, at last it struck us as some what strange that the complaints always were settled in a very short time, when we, after a very long time, could not do so, so one afternoon, we popped into our young friend's varandah, just as several kanganis entered with some important complaints for "master to settle." Our friend patiently listened to all their stories and complaints, *seemed* very much interested, passed a few brief remarks, got hold of a pen and some writing paper, pretended to be very busy, and said, "*Nalaku va*." The complainants seemed pleased, their complaint was attended to, it would receive consideration, it must be of some importance, master required time to consider. How very unlike the *periya durai*, who generally got angry and ordered them off, as a pack of fools, so, instead of lounging about with sour and angry countenance, or walking slowly away, as if they were meditating some deep scheme of vengeance against their adversary, they walked briskly away, in very good humour. "Well," we say, "you have got a temporary riddance, but what are you going to do, when they 'come back to-morrow?' Will you be any better able to settle it then, than you are now?" "Oh," says he, "is most likely they will cool over it, settle it amongst themselves, or perhaps even forget all about it." "But," we further ask, "you are not certain of this result, suppose they do come and remind you of this rash request, 'come to-morrow.'" He replied, "Just pay a little attention to them again, and give them another put off, they will get tired of always 'coming to-morrow.'" In fact," he continued, "sometimes when I really was busy, and really desired to

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arrange some dispute, and meant what was said, they did not come, and had to be ordered to make their appearance. They would then say *Shumma, shumma*, which just means, *tuts, tuts*, it was all nonsense, it was all settled. Now the previous day, it certainly appeared the very reverse of nonsense to them, and if master had tried to make any satisfactory settlement, do, or try what he could, he could not, but *nalaku va* did it." But don't mistake our meaning; don't for a moment suppose that this off put should be adopted when any matter of consequence is complained, *is* of any consequence, settle it at once with promptitude and decision and don't for an instant attempt to escape from responsibility, by putting it off, such cases must be dealt with at some time, the sooner the better, "*Nalaku va*" will merely increase the difficulty of doing so. If any thing is worth doing at all, if any thing is to be settled, or requires to be, do not procrastinate, never defer till to-morrow what can be easily done to-day. For without promptitude and decision, a man is little better than an animal, with two legs, and one of them sprained!

We have all heard of, or met with people, who very suddenly, and in some apparently unaccountable manner, suddenly changed their opinions. We make light of them, as being of no fixed principle, and call them "weathercocks," or "turn-coats." But the question really is, what has induced them to turn their coats? If they have done it, from increased investigation on the subject, or from any additional source of knowledge having been revealed, if they have changed their opinion from a decided conviction that their former line of conduct *was wrong*, instead of being sneered at, they are worthy of all honour and applause, as having not been ashamed to own an error, after they discovered it was one. Are reformed thieves, drunkards and profligates "turn-coats"? Of course they are, but they have turned their coats from the wrong side to the right, and instead of holding them, and others, in contempt, who have changed their course of action, upon decided convictions of errors, we ought, on the contrary, to point them out as examples well worthy of imitation to those, who have not the strength and force of mind, freely and frankly to confess, *I was wrong*, in case his friends and neighbours should call him *turn-coat*, or one without a mind of his own; for it does at times, require a good deal of strength of mind, both to shew and prove that you possess one, and intend to keep it. Only take care and don't become *obstinate*, a state of mind that is very often mistaken, (by its victim) for "promptitude and decision." The following short and true anecdote, will clearly illustrat

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our meaning. One day, the writer and a friend started on an expedition, to explore and make out a *short cut* through a dense jungle, into an adjoining district. The round about way, by the road, occupied the best part of a day, and it was perfectly evident that, if we could only manage a path through the jungle, the trip could easily be done in a couple of hours, or less. We felt perfect confidence in our friend, who was an old and experienced jungle traveller, and, so, on entering the forest, committed ourselves entirely to his guidance, and kept slightly in the rear. Our friend, thus, while having the satisfaction of having everything his own way, had likewise the pleasure of knowing that he only was the pioneer, and all the credit of opening out the path would remain with himself. But he also had the satisfaction, of it were any, of getting all the hard knocks, scratches and bruises, in making his way *first*, through the dense underwood. As he jocularly remarked, he was just as good as an elephant, and we could come after, on the trail. We say nothing, and keep quiet, for fear of causing any alarm, but mentally make the note, far better than an elephant, because nothing is more likely than that we may come upon some of those animals, in which event, you will be first, either the first to see them, or the first whom they will see, and in either case, I will not only be the first to run down on the back trail, but also have you between me, and our pursuer; so that by keeping behind now, eventually our positions may be reversed, in a way more agreeable to myself, than to you, for then I will be first;—and many a day, in after years, when travelling through the jungle of life, have we acted on the same principle. Don't be over anxious to be first, just come very *cannily* up on the trail of some bold adventurer, and keep him between you and the elephants, besides, in coming quietly after, you will possess the advantage of being, cool, having all your wits about you, and not bound to follow up every step he goes, you may even see he is not going exactly straight, and that you could easily take a short cut through an open wattle jungle, and get in advance, but don't do it, unless you happen to see a glimmer of light shining through the dark dense mass of foliage in front. Make for it sharp, never mind your guide now, and you are out in the clearing before him! Sit down on a stone, and rest; you hear him crackling and toiling inside that mass of underwood from which at last he slowly emerges, all torn and scratched. Thinking you are behind him, he calls out, "Come on, here we are all right." Just repeat his own speech, while he stands gazing in astonishment, exclaiming, "You here first! And without a ruffle or scratch." Our impatient young friends may think over this true

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story and apply it practically to themselves in their travels through the jungle of life. At another time, when on a jungle trip with a companion, we told him he was wrong, that he was going round the base of a hill, and the proper path was up this side, and down the other. "I know that as well as you," he says, "but it is a steep, tiresome way. Don't you see, we will avoid all that stiff pull up, by just going round the base of the hill, and it will just be all the same in the end, only infinitely less trouble." "Hope so," we reply, and keep at a respectful distance behind him. A crash and faint shout is heard in advance and our friend is out of sight; on coming up to the spot we find he had tumbled down the side of a steep *nullah* or ravine, just somewhat after the same manner as has already been described in recording the adventures of Jeremy Diddler in chapter the 36th, and a nice little variety it was to him to scramble up the side of that ravine again, in which we could not be of any assistance in any way. He got out of the ravine and *the scrape*, however—most young active fellows do but would not be convinced he had gone wrong: it was all *our* fault, who would persist in telling him he was wrong, until he became quite stupid and confused, and so also it was all *our* fault that he had tumbled over a precipice, rent all his clothes, and bruised his limbs. He was now quite unable to make any other search for the easy way round the base of the hill, and thus, tired, bruised and scratched, would now be obliged to take the beaten path up the hill. And thus it always is with the obstinate man, he will always persist in taking his own way or path; it is in vain to reason or remonstrate, worse than useless, because in event of failure he will just turn on you and declare his want of success was entirely owing to having adopted some of your recommendations, although it might be, no doubt, they were so very trifling as in no way to affect his general line of conduct or path through the jungle, but they were quite sufficient for him to use as a handle in order to exonerate himself! This little reminiscence will clearly define *obstinacy*, and to shew the difference I will now give another in illustration of "promptitude and decision." Travelling through a dense tract of jungle one day, with our friend Prompt, we both mutually came to the conclusion that we were lost; it was in vain to argue that this or that was the true course: we knew nothing about it. It was well on in the afternoon, it would soon be dark, we were proceeding to a lower elevation of the country from a higher one, but the "lay of land" was so undulating full of round hillocks that it was impossible just at this juncture to decide whether we were going up,

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or down. We paused beside a small stream to have a drink of water. Prompt looked down the course of the stream which trickled slowly along free from all large rocks and boulders; its bed presented an easy path, with walls of *nilu* underwood on each side. Says he, "I am quite sure this stream runs in the wrong direction; what a pity, for what a fine easy path it would be as compared with toiling through this dense underwood. Still," continues he thoughtfully "we want to go *down* and water runs *down*." "Come on," he cries, "it will be pitch dark in half an hour, and won't we be in for a night of it." As Mr. Kenneth would say his reasoning was prompt, decided and true. Off we both went, as hard as we could *peg* along that stream; it turned and twisted in every direction and we frequently called out, "Stop, stop, we are just going back again." Prompt and Decided only replied, "Come on." On we go, when Prompt suddenly came to a halt and commenced to look fixedly on the ground. "Do you see that?" says he, pointing to several stumps of sticks and wattles that had been cut with an axe. "Yes, well what about it?" we reply. "We are all right," says he, and slackened his pace; we then came upon a heap of sticks which had apparently been cut that very day, and there could now be no doubt about it, we were *close upon a elcari g*. Just then the faint beat of a tomtom, struck upon our ears. "Hurrah!" cries Mr Prompt, "in for regular luck: just when it is getting dark and we cannot see, we can make our ears do instead of eyes." Louder and louder beats the drum, the jungle gets light and open, there can be no mistake about that chattering and talking that now plainly falls on the ear. As we step out into a rough new clearing, we find ourselves in the vicinity of a coolie line, just as the sun has sunk down over the western horizon! They were merely rude huts constructed of dun tree bark and branches of trees, with the roofs so low that it was not safe to kindle a fire inside, so the coolies were all sitting outside, boiling and eating rice. In this remote wild there were no plantain tree leaves and they did not seem to possess any luxury in the form of plates, so three or four of them, of course of the same caste, sat round a large earthen chatty in which the rice had been boiled, and in which it still remained; into this chatty, alternately, each thrust one of his hands and withdrew it filled with rice; this he made up into a large ball, which he thrust into his mouth, and after a good deal of muscular exercise in the throat managed to get it down, very much putting us in mind of our youthful days in the old country, when we got possession of a nest of well-fledged sparrows and used to feed and gorge them with *coudier*, which means

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oatmeal softened in water, made up into balls and placed into the open bills of the hungry and expectant birds! They would swallow any amount of this food and even when their *crops* were completely full, and the *crowdie* could plainly be seen stuffed to the upper part of their throats, would gasp and gape for more! As we approached close to the huts, they all ceased their interesting occupation, got up, stood in groups, and whispered to each other. They were evidently somewhat alarmed. Who could these two men be? Could it be possible that they were men? With clothes all rent and soiled, no masters ever came out of that jungle before. It might be we were evil spirits, devils, in the form of men—they had heard that dark and dense jungle was the abode of some such, and that the screams of the devil birds, as master in his ignorance called them, proceeded from no bird at all but from evil and wicked demons whose homes were in that dark forest. Just as the alarm became extreme, a tall fellow who seemed to know us, whispered something to his neighbours which seemed completely to assure them; we also recognized the tall fellow as having run away from the estate sometime ago, and none could tell where he had gone, no trace of him at all could be found as having been seen passing along the usual thoroughfares, so it was very plain we had not been the original pioneers through this forest. It very frequently happened coolies knew by paths through the forests to other estates, and frequently used them, never saying anything at all about it to master, and their object in this was probably to get away from the estate, if they did not feel inclined to work without being observed and have a talk and gossip about pay and rice, and master and his kangani be under the impression that he was 'sick' in the lines. Had he been seen leaving the estate by any of the usual paths, he might be pounced upon, ordered back and compelled to go to work, or it might be they never thought of telling just because they were never asked. It sometimes happened, when consulting a kangani about the possibility of making a short cut through a piece of jungle, he would frankly say, "There is one: I will get a cooly who knows it, and shew master. We hailed the tall fellow, who recognized us, asking him what estate this was, and what was master's name. Upon receiving the required information we found this was not the estate we intended to visit, and that we were not acquainted with its master." But what matter, we could go no further that night and must make his acquaintance, request shelter for the night and the usual hospitality. So the tall fellow was asked where the bungalow was. "Close by," says he, "just round

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the hillock." A few minutes took us round to the bungalow, which was a very different construction to one of the present time. The master soon understood the unpleasant plight of his visitors, called out to the boy, not to reserve any rice and curry for himself, but to bring the whole of it in—sharp. The sooner the better for himself, as he would have all the more time left to cook a further supply for his own use. The rice and curry were soon placed in position, and just as soon placed in their proper position, which means, "found their level," and, as a rule, as beer and spirits were not always kept in stock, in the jungle, some good strong tea followed the rice and curry, on the "down trail," followed up by pipes and tobacco and a long talk. What is to be done about beds? There are no spare ones, not even a couch; so master asks us to hold the light, and bring it out into the back verandah. "The *cracked* tumbler lamp" is grasped, and our host seizes a table knife, proceeding in advance. He walks up to a large bale of dark looking stuff, tightly corded up, he applies the knife to the cords, and they separate, with a loud snap, and a large quantity of thick, warm Bombay cumblies, as if by magic, lie at our feet. Some half dozen of these are laid down on the mud floor, so as to form bed and mattress all in one, some more are rolled up at the foot, to be used as a top covering, as many as we will. Our host then opens an almirah, and brings out a lot of old clothes (clean). These he rolls up in another cumblie, and places it down, as a pillow, and our double bed is complete, for we both turn in, on the floor, together. There was no need to coax the "drowsy god," for he was watching to grasp his willing victim, who had no recollection at all, as to how he managed it, only, when at daylight next morning, a general hum and talking was heard outside, followed up by the well-known sound of "calling the roll, the victims started up in bewildered amazement, under a sudden impression that they had "slept in," and that the conductor was performing their duties. Morning coffee, or tea, is an older institution than even planting itself, so old that on the estates, before they produced coffee, we had of necessity to drink tea. Whether we preferred it or not, it was Hobson's choice, tea or nothing. But what they drink on the tea plantations before the leaf is ready for plucking, we have never heard. Probably, they just do as we did, buy or borrow some from a neighbour, or act on the same principle as we did, although the practical action was different, buy and use coffee because they had no tea, although

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living on a tea plantation, just as we bought and drunk tea because we had no coffee, although from our front verandah, it might be nothing was to be seen but coffee as far as the eye could reach. Our matins, or matinal refreshment, being over, our host is thanked for his hospitality and informed, we will do as much for him any day he may require or desire it. But before starting on the return trip, a consultation was held what course was best to adopt in order to prevent any risk of again being lost. "Lost!" cries Mr. Obstinate, "no fear of that. I know the land well now; the idea that an old jungle cock like me could be lost twice in the same forest. Ha, ha, come on, man!" But, before coming on, two coolies with bill-hooks were obtained from our host in order to clear the way in advance, and seeing a pocket compass on the table, the loan of it was asked and obtained. Arrived at the jungle edge, the coolies were put it advance under orders to clear away roughly, just to leave a free passage through. We followed up behind, compass in hand, keeping them to the right line, but, as the small underwood would speedily grow up again and obliterate the path, in order to leave a permanent trace, at every big tree we came to three or four good hacks of the bill-hook were made into its trunk. Under this plan, if you could not preserve the path open with very little examination you could always keep to the path *line*, for it was a long time before these marks on the trees healed up, and even, after they did, the bark still shewed where they had been. Most of the old surveyors had their own marks on the boundary lines, hacked deep into some large trees, so that, when in search of boundaries, years after the underwood was all overgrown, one would suddenly exclaim, "Here it is, for we know Braybrooke, or Wilson, cut this boundary, and here are their or his marks on this big tree." Of course we knew the direction in which the boundary ought to lie, say north; so with compass, another and another mark was discovered and then the underwood opened up between. This was called defining or clearing out our boundaries. Our friend was in a great hurry to get home, he had so much to do and really could not put of time waiting on this slow (but sure) process. "I am quite sure of my way," says he, "and will just push on alone, and leave you to crawl at this snail's pace, and, as I will pass by your bungalow, will look in and tell the boy you will arrive some three or four hours after and to have your dinner cooked." The reply is, "Do, like an obliging fellow, a worthy descendant from Jock Tamson."

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The shades of evening are again drawing on, as we come out of that jungle, into the well-known clearing and, although a wearisome and dreary day has been spent in it, we have our reward in knowing that it has been usefully spent for the future benefit of others for we know, feel perfectly certain, that not even Mr. Green himself could by any possibility lose his way now, in going through that forest, and at the bungalow the boy is shouted for, and told to bring dinner, to which he replies, "No dinner got. How was I to know that master was coming?" "Why, did not the Obstinate Durai tell you? He took a message for you." He says, "No master ever call here at all, either Obstinate or Pliable." We feel very much irritated at having been served such a mean trick, but, upon consideration, begin to suspect something, and tell the boy to make plenty rice and curry, in case Mr. Obstinate should turn up by and bye, and, in the meantime, turn the water on to the spout, and get coffee. The spout is *undergone*, no, gone under, either of the expressions will convey the correct explanation, the coffee is drunk, when we fancy a faint coo-hoo is heard proceeding from the far up clearing. It could not be our companion, for he most certainly could never come out at that *far end*, some one else lost in the jungle; dear me, who can it be? The coo-hoo is responded to, and mutually exchanged for some time, until, at last, a weary man is seen slowly toiling up to the bungalow, in woful plight. Can it be. Yes, it is our friend, who was to have been home three or four hours before us, and order dinner! "Why, old chap," we exclaim, "whatever has come over you? Instead of you ordering my dinner, I have kept some of mine for you: a case of 'the hare and tortoise,' is n't it? I thought *you* could not be lost in that jungle." "Lost!" says he, gasping for breath, nearly choking, in trying to laugh, "the idea of me being lost! The fact is, knowing that I would be home long before you, I just thought to go out of my way a bit, and have a look what sort of jungle it was, as lots of people are always asking me about land, and where any good pieces are to be had, so just went out of my way to examine, being on the spot." On being reminded, that he had left us on the plea of having so much to do at home, and no time to put off &c., he coolly remarked, so he had, but upon second thoughts, which you know some consider, perhaps erroneously, to be best, for although the principle of a first thought, the first fresh and keen perception of the brain, no doubt, is often right, yet it would be rash to act upon it, before being properly considered and improved by the second thought, so that second thoughts would be utterly useless, without

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the first thought to work upon. The first thought is the rough block of stone, which the second thought chisels into a handsome shape, and whoever heard of, or possibly could conceive the possibility of a nicely carved stone having any existence if there had not previously existed a coarse rough block. Here, he became quite exhausted for want of breath, so we lead him to the couch, and say, "Lie down and complete your discourse some other time, bottle up your thoughts, both first and second, in case they run away with the small amount of breath left you." But it was quite apparent that he wanted to say something and could not lie quiet, so in order to ease his mind he was told to speak whenever he felt able. After drawing a long breath he continued, "Upon second thoughts I considered it best just to have a look at the land at once, while on the spot, which of course would save another day, in coming back now." We reply, "You know or ought to have known that all that forest is already private property, and nothing has been heard of its owners wishing to sell, so in any case you have just wasted a day all for nothing, when you might have been at home settling up your own business which you say was so very pressing as to necessitate that most unfriendly action on your part of running away and leaving your travelling companion in the jungle, a very unkind action for which you have been suitably rewarded." "Well, well," says he, evidently quite ashamed of the subject and of himself, "now, when I think of it you are quite right. How very stupid it was." And thus it was that obstinacy actually acknowledged promptitude and decision to have been quite right, and himself to have been very stupid. But mark this well, after it was *too late*, after he had not only eaten your grapes, but had his teeth well set on edge, he even brought himself quite in a spontaneous manner to declare (but this was when his mouth and teeth were yet sore) that method or system, although apparently tardy, in the long run was the safest and surest, and that its after results were lasting, benefiting not only yourself, but many others who would come after you on the jungle path, be it through the forest, or through life. "Just suppose," he continued, "I had, by good luck, come direct through that forest, and left you far behind, no one else would ever have been one bit the better of my passage through. They could not have undertaken the trip with any safety. I left no marks, while you, while at the same time securing your own way, also opened up as a safe path for all who chose. They knew it was safe because you had successfully opened it out, whereas I in sheer obstinacy lost valuable time, got all scratched

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and bruised, have been of no benefit to any one; the only marks left by me are cuts and bruises on my own body, for which I get no compassion, am even laughed at!" Yes, after all, although it was said to be all luck and chance, there certainly was method in that slow fellow,

P. D. MILLIE.

CHAPTER XLIV.

MR. STALE'S SUBSTITUTE FOR THE LONG-DESIRED CHIMNEY—THE POSITION OF KITCHEN COOLY—THE BOY AND THE COOLY—THE COOLY'S MORNING EXCURSION AND OTHER TROUBLES—MASTER'S SHIRTS AND SADDLE—STRANGE CONDUCT OF HIS GALLANT STEED—THE WEAKNESS OF HUMAN CREATURES—FRIENDS SOMETIMES *de trop*—"TIFFS" BETWEEN FRIENDS: THE BEST WAY OF SETTLING THEM—IDLE GOSSIP AND ITS EFFECTS—"SAVE ME FROM MY FRIENDS"—SOCIAL JOKING—ADVICE TO THOSE WHO HEAR RUMOURS.

Our readers will remember the chimney smoked very much, and Mr. Stale seeing he was in for a bad bargain, had determined to make the most of it, so during the evenings he always had a nice glow from a charcoal fire, which smouldered away on the hearth, and did not smoke. But the great trouble that beset him was in procuring charcoal, for, although there was any amount of it within a hundred yards of the house, both the timber and ground being completely covered with it, the boy never had any time to collect and bring it in, and the kitchen coolie was always equally busy. It was in vain to protest, and give orders; the boy had always to go to the bazar, and the coolie to cut fire-wood, and master knew very well, if he carried out his orders with a high hand, that the boy would tell him, just at the dinner hour, either that he had no time to prepare dinner, or, that there was no firewood to cook it, the kitchen coolie having had no time to cut any. "For master know very well, master had sent him to carry in charcoal." Under this state of affairs, master began to consider, he had paid rather a high price for his chimney, and he had better let it alone, than have such a *cauld coal to blaw at*. It was four o'clock in the afternoon, and the coolies were all coming down from the upper clearing, where they had been filling up holes, and planting. There was a large coffee nursery close by the bungalow, from which the coolie pulled up plants, and carried them up to the planting field, in baskets, made of bamboo. When they returned from their work, in the afternoon, they left the empty

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baskets at the corner of the back verandah, to be ready for use next morning. As master came behind a string of coolies, each an empty basket resting over the back part of his head, forming a somewhat ludicrous head covering, or hood, a sudden idea struck him, as they were passing an immense heap of charred timber. He ordered them all to stop, and fill their empty baskets with charcoal, which was not so easily done as one would imagine, because they seemed to have a decided objection to fill the baskets even half full; they thought if they just put a couple of handfuls in, the load would be quite sufficient: "it was past 4 o'clock, why should they carry charcoal." So master had to coax them; it was no load at all, charcoal was very light weight, and he would let them off a little sooner from work to-morrow afternoon. They paused, and considered, but while doing so, the kangani came up, and threatened them all, with his long stick, speedily lifted the baskets off the heads of some very small boys, and very old women, filled them half full, placed them on their heads, and sent them off. Then turning round to the able-bodied men, said, "Now, lazy fellows, are you not ashamed to be beat by the boys and women?" But the lazy fellows did not seem one bit abashed, only after some muttering they at last stooped down, and put about two handfuls of charcoal into each basket, after which they tried to lift it, but pretended they could not, so the kangani had to fill the baskets half full, and lift them on to their heads himself. After this was done, they all gave a heavy groan, and commenced to totter down the hill, but when they came in sight of the lines and bungalow, they all commenced to run, as if their heavy load had all suddenly become very light. Arrived at the back verandah of the bungalow, of course they made a very great noise and chattering, as they heaped up the charcoal into a corner. This noise, of course, disturbed the boy prematurely out of his afternoon's sleep; in order to avenge himself, or probably thinking there was some row, he seized hold of an old coir besom, and came rushing out of the cook-house, in order to drive off the rude disturbers of his slumbers. But seeing at a glance what was up, the broom dropped from his hands, and he actually exerted himself, taking the baskets off the heads of the coolies, and emptying them himself, up against the verandah corner. He even became very vociferous, abused the people, saying, the baskets were not nearly full enough, and they must bring more to-morrow, and it was quite evident he took all the credit of the scheme to himself, as he very complacently said, "Now, master can always have a fire." But master, in a rather sarcastic way, said, he was

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not so sure about it, for possibly when he called for a fire, the answer would be, "Kitchen coolie not here to light it," so, he would be off in search of the coolie, whom, of course, he would not be able to find, and by the time either, or both of them had returned, he would have gone to bed. All the boy seemed to understand of this rather cutting remark was something about going to bed, so he said, "Yes sar, very good sar, but must bring master's dinner first. If the kitchen coolie would only come and make the curry, Master must get some other coolie, that man is altogether too lazy, and make too much work for me." We know not what may be the case now, but, in the olden times, there was always great difficulty in getting a kitchen coolie, out of any of the gangs: the occupation seemed to be extremely unpopular, and the reasons were various. In the first place, the coolie had two masters to please and propitiate—master and the boy both of whom had conflicting interests. He was a sort of scapegoat, upon whom the boy laid the blame of everything that was done wrong. The boy would send him off, on his own personal affairs, and he dared not refuse to go, while, very probably, if master found he had gone away any where, he would receive a good rating, which he was obliged to accept, and say nothing. Although the work he had to perform was light and easy, as compared with most of the estate occupations, still it was constant, and he must be always on the spot, in event of being called, and just at four o'clock, when his fellows in the lines had finished their day's work, and had the rest of the evening to themselves, his chief work was just commencing, in pounding curry-stuffs, washing rice, and blowing up the fire to cook master's dinner and then, after master had dined, the dishes were all to wash up, chatties to scrub and clean, his own rice to prepare and eat, as also food for the dogs, if any. If there was a horse on the estate, during the absence of the horsekeeper he would be sent to cut grass, carry up paddy and gram from the bazars; it was also his duty to cut and carry fire-wood, in all weathers. Sunday, the great gala day of the coolies, was no gala day to him, for the boy had generally some very pressing private business, which took him away, on that day, leaving the coolie to do the whole of kitchen work himself, as he best could. He must get up very early in the morning, before dawn (but that perhaps is no hardship to the coolie) in order to kindle the fire, and boil water, for master's coffee, while the boy was sound asleep, and just at a little before six, when the shout was given, "Boy, bring

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coffee," the boy would start off his plank bed, seize hold of the coffee and toast, which the coolie had been getting ready, during the past hour, and smartly bring it into the bungalow, evidently with the intention of leading master to suppose, that he had done it all, and was a most active and energetic servant, notwithstanding which, however, if there was any fault in the preparation of the coffee, or rice cake, it was always the cooly who happened to be the culprit! After master had finished his coffee and gone out to work, the boy would settle himself comfortably in the kitchen, in order to have his coffee at his ease, and, if master was in such a hurry to go off to work as to drink his coffee in a tepid state, why he need not do that, for he was in no hurry, so he would make himself very comfortable, and sent the kitchen cooly to sweep out the bungalow. Then master himself, when called upon to write to any of his neighbours, who might be, very frequently were, miles off, would suddenly call the kitchen cooly to start, instantler, *Suruka*, not a moment to lose. The cooly was eating rice; it always happens that when a kitchen cooly is urgently wanted, if he has not gone to cut firewood, depend upon it he is eating rice! After several and repeated calls, the cooly makes his appearance with his gullet and mouth so full of rice, which, in making frantic exertions to swallow and appear calm and composed, only tends to render his appearance as being very much discomposed, his hands were quite wet, and here and there were sticking upon them grains of boiled rice, boiled rice, very fine boiled rice, which, alas! must now be left in a dark corner of the kitchen until a more convenient season. But master, being quite used to this sort of thing, would just hold out a letter, mention the name of the estate, and say, *suruka*. But the cooly had sense enough not to take the letter into his hands dripping wet and sticky with rice kanji; his dirty hands are carefully wiped dry upon his much dirtier cloth, he seizes hold of the letter, which is flourished about in his hand, as he madly dashes off at full speed, down the approach to the bungalow. Arrived at his destination, master was not in the bungalow, he was a far way off at the working place, and so, to this place the cooly had to proceed with his missive; but his troubles are not yet over, master reads the letter and tells him he has no pencil in his pocket, so he must go back to the bungalow and wait there till he comes and writes out an answer, and it is some hours before he does come, during which period the cooly is sitting on his legs

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in a corner of the verandah, watching every motion of master's white hat and umbrella in the far off distance, and, just as he supposes now, he is coming, the white hat and umbrella disappear round a hill in a different direction altogether. The cooly feels sad, he cannot get that chatty of boiled rice out of his mind, which was so hurriedly left in a corner of the kitchen. Will it be there when he returns? What—dreadful thought—if the dog or cat should have found it out, and, presuming upon its being only a kitchen cooly's rice, have eaten it all up, and if, just as he is commencing to make ready to move, he should again be sent off with another letter to a much greater distance off, or, at once sent out by the boy to cut firewood! So, in order to banish all these unpleasant prospective ideas, he steps down to the lines to have a chat, and see if any boiled rice is available from any of his own caste there. No doubt he has found something congenial to occupy his time, for he is suddenly brought to a recollection of what he is here for, by the shouts of another kitchen cooly making inquiry about him, quick, *suruka*, master is asking for him everywhere, and has had his answer ready for the last hour. The cooly mentally comes to the conclusion that that word *suruka* is his besetting evil genius, is the devil sent by swamy to torment him; go where he will, it always attacks him, and always just at the most inconvenient times; just when he is beginning to feel comfortable and settled down without any inclination to bestir himself, up comes *suruka* in some shape or another with a very prompt demand upon him that he must. But for all this, a knowing cooly if he was sometimes pushed, would make up for it at other times. When the dishes were washed up after breakfast, he would shoulder his axe and be off to cut firewood, ostensibly only, for he would remain the greater part of the day in the lines. We have even known kitchen coolies who never cut firewood at all, if they could by any possibility help it, but stole it themselves. They, after spending a few hours at the lines, would secretly carry away a load of firewood belonging to others who were out at work, and bring it to the kitchen as the result of their own labours; and it used to be, perhaps even yet is, a common source of disturbance, stealing firewood from each other in order to avoid the trouble of cutting and carrying it.

If master kept a horse, the kitchen cooly would frequently have a portion of the horse-keeper's duties thrust upon him in this way. Supposing master was off on some excursion? Late

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on in the afternoon, the kitchen cooly, being under the impression that his rough work for the day had come to an end, would be sitting in a corner of the cookhouse, in a way peculiar to himself, neither on his "hind legs," nor his "twa soft cushions," but somewhat in a position resembling both of these graceful attitudes, or partaking partially of both. He was washing rice or pounding curry-stuffs between two stones, in fact, preparing his own dinner, and as the pungent flavour of the condiments entered his nostrils he would turn his head to one side and sneeze occasionally, after which, he would put his fingers to his nose, which just made him sneeze all the more, upon which the boy would make a dart and remove to a safe distance some dishes that were preparing for master's dinner; it might be, he had removed them in time, or what was more probable, after the damage was done. The cooly was fast getting into a happy frame of mind, passing his hands at times across his indented stomach, which was so very soon to change its shape and become in a very alarming appearance to all, except its happy owner, frightfully distended. The boy would suddenly start up as if he had forgotten something, seize hold of a grass-cutting hook, push it into the hands of the astonished cooly, and exclaim, "I forgot, no grass for the horse, master will be here directly and kick up a row, off with you and cut a bundle." From past experience the cooly knew remonstrance was useless, he also well knew that, if there was no grass, would not he catch it? So, his half-cooked dinner was removed from the fire, until he had time to attend to its completion. It was a heavy rain, so he threw off the whole of his clothes, except the crupper, knowing well, that during the monsoon rains it was much easier to dry his skin than his clothes. He took hold of this grass knife and a piece of rope to bind up the grass, placed an old mat bag over his head and shoulders, and went down into the swamp, from whence he soon returned with a load of grass, but also with something else, for his legs were streaming with blood, as the swollen and distended leeches dropt off them on the kitchen floor. Just as he got them all picked off, and the flow of blood from their bites somewhat staunch-ed, he proceeded to renew the process of cooking his dinner, but the fire was low, and had to be kindled up. As it commenced to crackle and throw out some heat, the curry chatty was again placed on the top of the red sticks, but again as suddenly removed, as the sharp pace of a horse is heard approaching the premises, for he knew what was sure to be the result of this, knew correctly, from many a former experience. "Boy," shouts the

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master, for it was he, "send that coolie here to take in the horse, and clean him well down, the horse-keeper is far behind. *Suruka*." "Always *suruka*," growls the coolie, "I'm better used to it now than my own name, but for all that they will never make me become *Suruka*." Just as the horse is well rubbed down, and after placing the bundles of grass under his nose, the coolie has washed his hands, blown up the fire and resumed his culinary operations, the horse-keeper arrives in a breathless state, examines some bags in a corner room, proceeds and reports to master, "No paddy, no gram got." The master flares up, calls the boy who of course says it is all the kitchen coolie's fault, and the result is, that the coolie is sent off immediately, away to the bazar, some miles off, to bring up food for the horse, in the shape of paddy and gram, as fast as his legs can carry him : *suruka* again. When he comes back, of course his master's dinner must be attended to, and his own set aside, in a half-cooked condition. After that, there are the dishes to wash up, and, what with one thing and another, he does not feel easy in his mind, until the light in master's bedroom is out. When master is dressing next morning a button on the wristband of his shirt is found to be off, and the one on the other band reduced to a *piece*, hanging on by a thread. The boy is called, and ordered to bring forth another, which, after being put on, is found to be wanting in the collar button. This is also pitched aside, and another brought out of the drawers, which is discovered, of course after it is on, to have no buttons in front. The boy, on making further search in the wardrobe, is able to find nothing but a lot of useless old rags. Master is furious at this detention, which is sure always to happen, just when he is in a very particular hurry to go out. "Send down to that washerman quick," says he, "and bring up a clean shirt. Where is that kitchen coolie?" "Where is the coolie?" echoes the boy; but there is no reply. A rush is made round the premises, until at last he is discovered at *the spout*, washing up a number of dishes. "Come along, quick, *suruka*," screams out the boy, but no sooner is the word *suruka* out of his mouth, than the coolie as a matter of course starts up, knowing well, that he, he only, is wanted. Off he starts at full speed to the washerman's house, who of course is not yet risen from his slumbers. After any amount of 'row' he explains the state of matters at the bungalow, and in return receives the explanation, that "no clean shirt got." The coolie knows, if he brings back this information, all the blame will be laid upon *him*, so he says, a

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clean shirt *must* be got. The washerman, on hearing this, unties a large bundle of clean clothes, wrapped up in a *dirty* sheet or tablecloth, from which he extracts a shirt, the property of one of his customers ; Mr. Lank shoves it into the coolie's hand, saying, "Take that." On arriving at the house, he finds a nice little storm has been brewing, on account of the length of time he has been away, but when the shirt is put on, and found that it will neither button at the wrists nor collar, the storm bursts in full force upon that coolie, who, instead of bringing master's shirt, has brought one, the property of some one else. "Take that shirt, go back, and get it changed. *Odu! Suruka!!*" But the coolie does not hear "*Suruka*" this time, for the first word, "*Odu*," he has mistaken for "*Adi*," a word, especially when there is any near prospect of its being put into practice, he holds in far greater dread and destestation than his constant enemy "*suruka*." But when the two are used together, the effect is somewhat similar to the application of an electric battery to his bare legs. "If you don't be quick, run, you will be beaten." Under these circumstances, whoever tries to *beat* the kitchen coolie on a run will be *beaten*. But it is astonishing how people do, or at all events did, manage to dress, under adverse circumstances. But, in the meantime, the horse is brought round to the door. Master is late, and in a great hurry to be off. So, one of the originally rejected shirts is again resorted to, and the boy put in active service. "Some good strong thread, *suruka*." This being procured, he rolls it round the wristbands several times, ties a good double knot, and bites off the ends of the string with his sharp teeth, as cleverly, indeed much more so, than a pair of scissors would have done. He then, with a penknife, hastily snatched from the writing-table, bores two holes in the shirt collar, where the button and button hole had, or ought to have, been. Into these he inserts another piece of string, and, while biting off the ends with his teeth, master suddenly feels squeamish, from a strong smell of garlic, inhaled into his nostrils. "No buttons on the front," he exclaims, "look sharp and bring a couple of pins," which being fastened, he now feels sort of being rigged out. But there is something else. "Spurs, what have you done with my spurs?" "Here sar, coming sar," shouts the boy, dragging out from under the clothesstand, from amongst a heap of old useless shoes, all heaped over with equally useless dust and dirt, the missing spurs. Without examination, they are hastily applied to the heels of the boots, but they won't stick on, one spur is wanting an

upper strap, or has the buckle broken, the lower strap of the other is broken in the centre, and the two pieces hang from each side of the spur. Master now begins to feel as if he was fairly beaten ; all his wrath and haste are exhausted, he even feels quite resigned, when he looks up, and sees that his horse has cropped off all the buds off some attempts at flowers, in the front border, which he had long tended in hopes that they would come to something. The kitchen coolie now comes rushing in with a skein of twine, which the boy had promptly, and on his own responsibility, despatched him to the store for, and the servant, who, very probably from self-interested motives, had his own private reasons for taking all this trouble to get master equipped, and off, says, "Please master, don't be sorry !" He takes the twine, kneels down in front, passing several plies of it across the catches of the spurs, until they are just as firmly fastened on, perhaps firmer, than by the usual leather straps. "Now for it," cries master, as he makes a rush towards his steed, grasps the reins and mane with his left hand, and the saddle with his right, while the horsekeeper holds the stirrup iron, into which his foot is heavily thrust. Raising himself up on his right foot, for a moment, the whole weight of his body rests on that stirrup iron and leather. A moment more, and he will be in the saddle, but a moment is sometimes not such a very contemptible period of time as some suppose, for a moment more, instead of being in the saddle, he was lying flat out on the road, and the horse, starting with fright, had broken away from his keeper, but luckily had only run back into the stable. The buckle of the stirrup leather had given way. As this would take a long time to repair, this proceeding of the horse was just the wisest thing he could have done. The saddle is brought into the verandah, and master, the boy, kitchen coolie, and horsekeeper, all eagerly set about repairing it. Each one has his own idea of how it should be done, until there are actually some risks of a serious quarrel which is ended by master ordering more twine, and the penknife : the penknife is put into use as an auger or bore to make holes in the leather, through these holes the twine is inserted and firmly knotted until all is fast and secure. Another source of detention was the giving way of the under chop strap of the bridle, which happened in this way. The master was standing all ready in the verandah, calling out for his horse, which was standing in front of the stable, undergoing a final rub down with one of the dirty kitchen towels, but all attempts to smooth down that rough long hair only made it start and stick up all the more,

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until at last the towel was thrown into the kitchen verandah, from which it was quickly picked up by the coolie, in order to complete his finishing stroke of cleaning the dishes. The horsekeeper catches hold of the reins and proceeds to drag the animal up to the front door, but the horse is very reluctant to make a movement, indeed the action more nearly represents the dragging along of a huge ungainly weight than the leading of a horse, whose front feet seem to be slowly lifted by the force acting on the reins, and the hind feet trailed along in a sympathetic motion with the front ones. The drag and strain on the bridle being thus very severe, suddenly the under chop strap gives way, having split at its junction with the larger one; the result of course is, that the horsekeeper staggers a few steps forward with the whole of the bridle in his hand, which had completely slipped off the horse's head. The animal, to his astonishment finding himself very unexpectedly at liberty, did what many of his superior grades of animals do under the same circumstances suddenly, from a state of dreamy inaction, became all alive and quite frisky; he threw up his tail, shook his head, then put it down low over his legs; starting off down the road at a smart gallop, pursued with loud shouts by all the residents in the kitchen who had been anxiously watching, impatiently expecting a departure in a very different way. The noise behind merely made him gallop the faster until he could not resist stopping, on approaching a patch of guinea grass into which he entered and commenced to graze. "Now for it," cry the kitchen squad as they cautiously approach. The boy being the first, as being the most interested in master's speedy departure makes a dart, and so also does the horse--off another fifty yards. where he again proceeds to tear away at the grass. After this little game has gone on for some time, an idea strikes the horsekeeper who runs off and returns with the stable paddy sifter (a sort of flat open basket) in which are a few handfuls of paddy: this he throws up in the air in the usual accomplished style of stablemen, and as it again descends makes a rattling sound, which always commands the respectful attention of an intelligent horse. He hears the well-known sound, looks up and sees the well known basket, stretches forth his neck in a longing manner actually makes a few steps forward to meet his expectant capturers, when just as his nose is about to plunge into the grain his eyes catch sight of the end of a rope dangling from the other hand of the horsekeeper, behind his back. Quickly his mouth is plunged amongst the paddy, and as quickly removed, quite full; off he

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again starts at full speed with his mouth full. Standing at a safe distance off, it is eaten with infinite relish, leading one to suppose that the old saying of "Stolen waters are sweet" is applicable also to horses. As his assailants again approach he does not make off now. A quantity of water is running out of his mouth, silently giving the information, that it is watering for more. The horsekeeper now gives the rope to the boy, telling him to keep behind, but not too far, to keep a strict watch and be ready. The operation of rattling the paddy is again gone through with, with like success, and, just as the muzzle of the horse is plunged amongst the grain, the horsekeeper seizes hold of his forelock hair, then a wild struggle takes place, during which the boy quickly step up and passes the rope round his neck; all is over, the horse well knows his temporary *sprees* has come to an end, and makes no resistance, an example to his betters, who sometimes will persist in vain struggles, useless because hopeless, tending to nothing but to exhaust their own strength in purposeless efforts to escape. The horse was caught and subsequently subjected to saddle, bridle, and many a good dig of the spurs, caught easily by a little skilful practice upon his weak point. Now, although some of us human animals are perhaps not aware of it, we have all our weak points. Examine yourself and ask what is yours? A fellow, whose weak point is liquor, or, it may be, just because his head cannot stand it, one glass would set it spinning and have as injurious an effect upon him as two or three bottles would upon his friends, and these gentlemen are perfectly aware of his constitutional weakness, or, if he can command his weakness, it will be his strength. This fellow enters a room where a number of his friends are met, and having a friendly glass; he is pressed on all hands to chime in, be social, and have a drink. He refuses, but he is just pressed all the more. "It is seldom we all meet," it is unsocial, *unfriendly*. He cannot stand this accusation, but takes the offered glass, and while raising it to his lips, a friend indeed, a friend in need, gives his foot a knock, under the table, casting on him at the same time a glance, at once understood. The result is, the glass just touches his lips, and is set down. Now there was no social necessity for that warning touch of the foot, and very likely, had the contents of the glass been swallowed, it would have been considered a bit of impertinence, an unfriendly act, but as it was given at the proper time, and acted upon as a friendly warning, it was successful. Who, in all that gathering, was the friend of the fellow with

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the weak point? An old acquaintance, still to the fore, once said, snapping his fingers, "That for friends." A man's friends have more frequently been his ruin than his enemies! The man who has always lots of friends often cannot get his work attended to. Then, the visits of friends necessitate returning them, and we have known some, even a good many in our day, whose occupation seemed to be receiving and returning the visits of friends. There is an old saying, that "Your sin will find you out," to which may also be added, "and so will your friend." He is come to visit you, having nothing to do at home, while you are very busy, far away from the house, training in a gang of inexperienced pruners. You ought to be constantly beside them, but before you have been half an hour on the spot, the kitchen coolie arrives in a breathless state, saying, a friend (?) is at the bungalow, and has sent for you, to come immediately. Thinking it must be some pressing business you hurriedly start off, and find him lying on the couch smoking a pipe. "How are you old boy," he exclaims, "just found it rather dull at home, being very short of coolies, and nothing to do, so thought I would just look you up," &c. Now, we by no means wish to hold friends, or neighbours, in small esteem; good friends and neighbours in a district are not to be thought lightly of: like many things else, you will not understand their value until you lose them. But we do think it a selfish and unfriendly thing for a friend to do, that because he has no coolies and nothing to do *he* should, just for his own relief and gratification, visit you, and require your presence at the bungalow, you, who have plenty of coolies, and work for them also. We have said selfish, but no doubt the expression is too strong, it ought to have been written thoughtless, and it was just entirely owing to these selfish or thoughtless friends, that at one time there was a certain degree of dislike amongst proprietors, to those superintendents who had the name of being fond of company. It was not the fact, or act, of being fond of company, but the unreasonable and unseasonable times at which it was indulged. If you were busy measuring coffee in the cherry loft, the kitchen coolie would make a push through the crowd, and say a friend (?) was at the house, and wanted you. You would feel inclined to pitch the picking-book in his face, but would say, "Busy; will be up by and bye." But if you would not tell a kangani to measure in that coffee, and walk off to see your friend, why, he just popped into the cherry loft to see you, and would probably begin and talk during the intervals of measuring,

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until you did not know very clearly what you were about, would omit to put down a name, and its owner of course would be put absent, which caused any amount of row and ill-feeling on pay-day. Now, that friend committed, without intending it, an unfriendly action, for, when he found his host was at the pulping house, he ought to have remained at the bungalow until he came, or, if he did trot down to the store, should not have entered the cherry loft so long as the measuring was in full operation. Men who have nothing to do themselves have no right to intrude themselves, during working hours, upon those who have. We have no intention whatever of discouraging the genial hospitalities of the country: quite the reverse, and must explain that this remark is meant solely to apply to residents in a district, who can easily on any day visit each other, after hours, or during slack time; and in no way does it apply to visitors from other and distant parts of the country, or passing travellers, all of whom are justly entitled to every courtesy and attention. Nothing used to be more common, especially in small districts, than squabbling amongst neighbours, although why this propensity should be more prevalent in small than in large districts is very odd: one would naturally suppose that in a small district your neighbours would be appreciated all the more, because they were few. The remedy for which is, bear and forbear with your neighbour in his moments of folly, knowing that surely your time will come too, when you will require his forbearance, which you will no doubt all the more readily receive, for having borne with him, and thus the moments of folly or too hasty irritation, instead of separating your friendship, will eventually tend all the more to cement it; just on the same principle as the old saying, "Nippen an skarten is Scotch courtin." But even should you begin to think that your neighbour's "moments of folly" are likely to lengthen into hours and days, becoming too tiresome and frequent to put up with, what is the use of bickering and quarrelling, keeping that unhappy kitchen coolie continually on the road with letters, which serve no end at all, unless to make matters worse. Go and have a personal interview with your ruthless enemy, and, if you can't come to a friendly understanding, just simply let each other alone, and have as little communication as possible. Unless a neighbour has been guilty of very ungentlemanly or blackguardly behaviour, it is a silly thing not speak to him; if you do not desire his fellowship, by all means withdraw from it. It will not in the least compromise your dignity, when you

meet to give him a nod and say, "It is a fine day," and in this case, should any events turn up, in matters of business which absolutely require your having a little talk with "that beast of a fellow," you will not feel so awkward in doing so, as if you had neither looked at nor spoken to him for a couple of months. Depend upon it, it is always a good and safe policy to keep on speaking terms with a neighbour and, if not mutually agreeable, your acquaintance need be nothing more. You will likely say, all very true, but it takes two to make a bargain, so also are two required to speak and if, when I speak to you, he takes no notice of me, it is a gross insult, a cut direct and very humbling to myself. But not so fast, it is not a humiliation to yourself, but to him, and if he told the truth, he felt so. After passing a man without noticing a well-meant salutation, although our pride was gratified, yet after a while we do not generally feel gratified or satisfied. On the other hand when, on saluting a neighbour, who had taken the 'huff,' 'pet,' or 'dorts,' as they call it in Scotland, and receiving no reply, in spite of us, a hearty laugh would burst out at the extreme absurdity of the case, which only increased the ire of our *friend*, but the result would probably be, after he had posed on, or slept over it, he would come to the sensible conclusion that the quarrel could not be such a very serious one after all, or his neighbour would not be laughing at it or—could it be?—at him. So, very probably, next day, the kitchen cooly would turn up at your bungalow with a letter of four pages, closely written, commencing with "Sir," and ending "Your most obedient servant," the purport of it being a wish to know if you regretted having said that he paid a penny a bushel on coffee hire per cart more than there was any need for. Now for it, be cautious what you reply, or the whole district will be roused up in a buzz like a *wasp's* *bink*, and, instead of having one enemy, you will have a dozen all down upon you like an extinguisher, so that even the very kitchen coolies, who are all employed from morning to night in running to and fro with letters, will know very well that "the fat is all in the fire," amongst the durais. Never mind telling who told you this bit of information: if any one did tell you, just say that you had casually heard it, but of course if he denied it it must have been a false rumour, that cartmen do tell crackers in order to raise hire; and that it is perfectly sufficient for you, to hear from himself that your information was merely a false rumour; you had intended calling and asking, but had been busy, &c. Call as soon as possible after this, and, take an old

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hand's word for it, you will be graciously received. "Graciously received!" some "Young Ceylon" may exclaim; "we had no idea you were such a poor spirited fellow." But just let me tell you, it often requires a great deal more spirit and pluck, to overlook and forgive "a slight," than to avenge one. So the result is, neither of you is asked, and you sit all that evening in your verandah, in the lounging chair with your feet up against the verandah post, smoking and gazing at the lights in your friend's house, wondering what can be the reason he did not ask you, but you will serve him out for this cool trick, you won't ask him any more, you will give up visiting him altogether, he has gone over to your adversary's side.

In every case of these district disputes, few can stand boldly up and say, "I only am right, and my adversary utterly wrong." Make up your mind to accept this as a truth, and then examine and find out the points on which you are wrong. Do this first, before hammering on *his* wrong point, for, if you are not wrong, the extreme probability is that you have been misunderstood, misrepresented. Go and call upon him; ten minutes' conversation on the subject is better than ten letters. "Quite true," you will say, "but who is to call first?" That is always the sore point. Go yourself, and by this prompt and simple act you will afterwards find that, instead of humbling yourself before your enemy, it is you who have gained the victory, and he himself, although he does not acknowledge it, will inwardly feel that you have, because you have acted in a rational and reasonable manner, taken the first step, and so proved that you wish peace.

No man can tell of any seed that it will grow, but if he sows plenty he may be pretty certain that some of it will sprout and come up, and when he sows he does not know what will not. Even amongst good seed, unknown to himself there may be lots of light seeds which will eventually give him trouble enough. But what man in his senses would ever sow the seeds of "Spanish needle," and "white weed"? And yet this is just what you do when you commence to gossip and tattle to the hurt of your neighbour. Let them alone: plenty of weeds and tattle will constantly spring up, without being sown. "You can't shut your ears," but you can keep your mouth shut; if you not only shew no interest in the tale bearer's tales, but tell him your mind on the subject, he will go to a more willing hearer. Tell him, if your friend got *screwed* in Kandy, as his friend, instead of publishing it throughout, he ought never to have mentioned the subject: his turn might come some day,

when he might be glad of the consideration of his friends, and never forget the old saying, "Do as you would be done by." Every word you say may be likened to seed sown which will spring up and bear some fruit, it may be very trifling and unimportant, it might be so light and fragile that it would appear to find no resting-place, but it will for all that. Just look at the seeds of the Spanish needle and white weed, how very light and trifling specks they seem to be, when one or two are first seen scattered over your clearing; if neglected see the after results, and their cost. Just one or two of these white weeds, which you might have pulled up, when walking along, put in your pocket, and carried off, will, if allowed to remain and shed their seed, spread over the whole estate, destroy your coffee, or entail any amount of expenditure in keeping them under. And just so it is with the first seeds of gossip and tattling: nip them in the bud, put them in your pocket, to be afterwards put in the fire, and say nothing. While keeping your estate clean and clear of weeds, don't forget to keep your house clean and clear of gossip and tattling! Be careful of the weeds, the letting in of evil in any shape, however small, it be to your estate, or your bungalow, for, like the letting out of pent-up water, none can foresee what damage they, or it, will cause. Be careful also of your friends! We have all read of Job, and his friends, how they came to comfort him, and how they did it and human nature in this respect, as in many others, is very much the same still. We have all heard, and are used too, the modern expression, "Save me from my friends"—but the phrase is far from being modern, is as old as the very oldest writing, as the book of Job itself, which is said by some to have been the first manuscript written of the Scriptures. We need not caution any to be careful of their enemies: let them alone for that, they are wideawake on that point. We are armed, in self-defence, against the attacks of enemies, while our bosom is bared to a friend. What if, from the force of circumstances, he should become unfriendly? and at once pierce you through, in your most vulnerable point, of which he was well aware, when he was a friend; for there is an evil, not in becoming too friendly, but in becoming too intimate; for however similar any two may be, in their natures and habits, all must admit, that there are depths in the human heart which ought to be kept silent, dark, even from a friend, in case his friendship should cease. Just as in the old saying—"Too much familiarity breeds contempt"—so, very excessive friendship will frequently defeat its own purpose, and degenerate into imprudent

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interference, quite uncalled for, on the part of the friend, who has just taken the liberty of a friend, or what, if done, or spoken, by one with whom you were not so well acquainted, would be called, a gratuitous, unsolicited and uncalled for piece of impertinence!

Social joking is often no joke: your social joker is never a popular man, for, although all laugh at his jokes, they laugh with fear, not knowing how soon they also will come in for it themselves, but it may be questioned if the company really are amused, they perhaps laugh, thinking they are expected to do so, in compliment to the joker, who is generally the first to laugh at his own squibs. If you are tired of them they are easily put an end to in this way: when the joker passes his next joke, and of course laughs first, don't return the laugh, on the contrary look grave, and appear to be in conversation with your next neighbour, whom you may touch accidentally on the toe, which will probably induce him to become very serious in his talk also, and it is not likely you will have any more jokes that evening. A joke in season, or at a suitable time, gives life to the company; if you know how and when to bring it in, do so, but don't overdo it.

In case our readers may consider this production somewhat dictatorial, dull, stupid, and altogether out of the usual routine, and say, even "old Stale" was better than this, we will endeavour to give them a laugh, at closing, and so part, in good humour, happy to meet again.

A certain gentleman was one afternoon busy taking in coffee from the coolies, in the cherry loft, when the boy forced his way through the crush, and said, "A friend come to bungalow, and sent for master." All planters will agree, that, if they have a temper at all, it will shew up, on being disturbed on this trying occasion, in such a needless way, so the gentleman said sharply, "*Pisasuku po.*" The boy disappeared, but not where he was ordered to. He told the visitor that "Master was very angry, and taking (talking) bad spirits." "Dear, dear," says the visitor, "how very sad, and down in the store, before all the coolies," and thinking he might be of some use, either in assisting one who had taken a drop too much, or in quelling the evil spirits, by finishing them off himself, he hastened to the pulping house, and as he pushed through the coolies who thronged the cherry loft, instead of smelling spirits, the smell was such as to induce a craving on his own part to find that bottle! But master was busy, never looked up—and there were neither bottles nor glasses to be seen. "Must be in the tool room behind," he thinks, so looks in, and sees a black bottle standing on the

floor; he stoops, and applies it to his nostrils, but it contained only oil and charcoal, for marking bags, which left its mark on the point of his nose and upper lip. He now speaks to master, who looks up, and bursts out laughing, in which merriment all the coolies joined. "Regularly screwed," thinks the visitor, "and all the coolies laughing at him. My dear fellow, come away home, and leave the kangani to measure in the coffee." So he lugs him by the arm, out of the cherry loft, and across the barbecue, heedless of all remonstrances, each supposing the other to be the worse of liquor. Of course the ludicrous mutual mistake was soon explained, and was a standing joke in the district for many a day; but if that friend had not acted the part of a friend, had he done what most would have done in his position, gone away without acting a friendly part toward his friend, and told all his friends that "Stiggins" was going all to the dogs, for when he went to pay him a visit, the boy told him he was drinking in the pulping house. These friends would tell others that "Stiggins" had been seen drunk in the pulping house during the very time he was trying to measure in the coffee, and there is no saying where the gossip would have ended or what it would all have eventually tended to, and the moral of this short anecdote is simply and briefly this:—When you hear any rumour especially if it comes through natives, before relating it to others first make yourself perfectly certain as to its being correct in every point of view, for recollect, the boy and others of his tribe are not adepts at the English language, and a very slight error on their part may entail a very grave responsibility on you in repeating their tale.

Some of our young friends may exclaim, "How he does rattle on." Ay, but he has not much time left now to rattle long: all my life is behind me, and all your life before you, which makes a very great difference, as you will no doubt discover, after having rattled along life's journey as long as your old friend. But you are coming on too, and don't ever forget that it is far better to rattle on than to *be* rattled on. Others may exclaim "Here's another rattle ended from that old riddled"—"Stay, not so fast, not nearly riddled out yet!" "Well another rattle from the pen of

P. D. MILLIE."

THE VISIT OF A SILVERSMITH, AND ITS RESULTS.

CHAPTER XLVI.

“ORU TATTAN VARADU”—SPEAKING AT, AND NOT TO—WHY THE SILVERSMITH’S ADVENT IS NOT PLEASANT NEWS FOR “MASTER”—THE “GUILLESS” COOLY, MALE AND FEMALE—THE BUNGALOW IN A STATE OF SIEGE—MASTER CREATES A FEELING OF JEALOUSY ON THE ESTATE—THE EFFECT OF THE SILVERSMITH’S ARRIVAL ON THE RELATIONS BETWEEN HUSBAND AND WIFE, AND THE ARDENT MALE AND THE CARELESS FEMALE LOVER—HUMAN NATURE THE SAME THE WHOLE WORLD O’ER—LOVE A THING OF THE PAST; SETTLEMENTS THE PRESENT ORDER OF THE DAY—THE ARRIVAL OF THE “TATTAN”—THE WORK AND THE GOSSIP IN THE VERANDAH—WHY THE TATTAN WAS MARRIED—THE SILVERSMITH’S WIFE—THE WAY SHE INCREASED HIS MONEY—THE TATTAN AND MASTER’S ORDERS—THE WIFE AND THE MASTER; THE LATTER OUTWITTED—ARRIVAL OF THE “PERIYA DURAI”—AN AWKWARD POSITION—A SCUFFLE AND ITS RESULTS—A SUDDEN DEATH AND A QUICKER RESURRECTION—BAD CONDUCT AND PUNISHMENT OF THE TATTAN’S WIFE—AN INTERESTING RECONCILIATION—CLEVER MANŒUVRING OF THE TATTAN’S WIFE—HOW WIVES GAIN THEIR ENDS—AN EXAMPLE IN CIVILIZED LIFE.—WHY WE SHOULD STUDY ONE ANOTHER’S CHARACTERS—THE WAY TO MANAGE COOLIES—A RETROSPECT, AND A GROUNDLESS FEAR.

“*Oru tattan varadu.*” (A silversmith, or itinerant working jeweller, is coming.) Some of our old planting friends will instinctively feel a sort of creeping sensation in the nervous system, an undefined feeling of dread passing over them, when these three Tamil words, with which the chapter opens, once more strike the eye, or catch the ear.

But why should master feel discomposed at the prospect of a silversmith paying a visit to the estate, in the exercise of his calling? One would be apt to suppose, that he would rather be pleased that the women would soon have an opportunity of converting their rupees, into rings, bracelets, and other ornaments, and thus secure the savings on their wages, more securely, than in the flitting and uncertain tenure of rupees. For even when rupees are wanted, the ornaments can always command them, by being placed in pledge, an alternative, however, which is only resorted to under the last extremity of necessity. Every day, when master

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is behind the working gangs, the constant talk of the women is, "A silversmith is coming," the curious feature of the case being that this expression is not meant for social information amongst themselves, for they are all perfectly aware of this important fact, and have been, for a considerable time past; the fact being, what master is quite aware, that its intended specially for his own information, a sort of speaking *at*, instead of *to*, him, something that they wish him to know, and there are no greater adepts at this plan than the coolies. It would never do at all for people in their position, especially, if they hold the master in proper respect, to be continually talking *to* him, telling him all their little wants and expectations, probably causing a good deal of irritation, and ill-humour, and thus defeating the very object for which they were told. Thus it is, that when you have no rice in store, as you approach a working party, you will hear them all in very earnest conversation telling each other, that they are very hungry and had nothing to eat last night, that they cannot stand this very hard work on empty stomachs, indeed, that this important organ in the human frame, is in great pain. Some of them will then place the palm of the hand over the pit of the stomach, bend forward, and groan heavily, but whenever master turns his back, and goes off to another working party, all this ceases, they commence and talk about something else, and, if master is sharp in hearing, he will likely hear some laughing, which will quite set at rest the anxiety he was beginning to feel about the pains in the coolies' stomachs. Likewise also, if it is well on in the afternoon, he will overhear long discussions about the state of the sun, that it is going down fast, that it is setting, and that it is quite plain, they will have no time to cut firewood and boil rice, which just simply means, and is meant as a polite way, to let master know, that *they* consider it is four o'clock, past it and more than time to stop work, although of course, they could not presume plainly to tell him so. Then, at morning muster, if there are any hard works going on, such as cutting roads, timber, or holes of any sort, in hard ground, the coolies will all commence and talk to each other, in master's, hearing, about the blistered state of their hands, spreading them out, the one; will narrowly inspect those of the other, and, in a loud voice each will declare, that the other cannot possibly do this work; it may be even, that the hands are spread out in a piteous manner, for master to see, as he passes, but nothing is said, until at last the hopes of the sufferer evaporate, on being touched on the

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shoulder by the kangani, and told off, to hole. Some may say, we quite understand this drift of talking *at*, in the instances given, but what has this to do with the *tattan*? This is a private affair altogether, with which the master has nothing to do. All very true, nothing directly, but every thing indirectly. For what is the use of a silversmith, without silver, as a metal, to work upon, and the man who is expected to provide the metal in the shape of rupees, is, of course, master, for who else could it be. And thus it was, that the clink of the silversmith's hammer in the lines, was always the sure precursor of a clink out of your money bag, in the form of advances. But that was a matter for your own decision on behalf of the estate, although it pestered and annoyed you, it did not come out of your own pocket. But woe to that pocket, supposing your boy had a wife and children, if some day, suddenly, the clink of the *tattan's* hammer was heard to proceed out of the kitchen verandah! Master might be sitting in his verandah after working hours when a Tamil girl would approach up to one of the posts, behind which she would stand, and of course say nothing, until she was not only asked, but pressed to speak. After a good deal of coaxing, the reply would be, "*Tattan vandaradu*" (The silversmith is come): not "*varadu*" (coming) but "*vandaradu*" (is come); all doubt about the matter at an end, he is come. You might give a nod of assent, you knew this, but what is it you want? The girl would then spread out at full length, her bare arms, free from all ornament of any sort, with one hand she would slowly stroke the other arm from the shoulder downwards, and say "*Kappu*" (armlets). If you are still in doubt, and press for further information, after a good deal of twisting of fingers, scraping of toes, the short word, "*Rua*" (rupees) will be uttered. Should you feel generously disposed to make an advance, and offer ten rupees, it will be rejected with disdain, what sort of bracelet will ten rupees make! "*Chi chi*, master knows nothing about women's ornaments; the very least sum that will do, is thirty rupees for one bracelet, and as one is shabby, she must have a pair, and sixty rupees to melt down and make them, also twenty more, to pay the silversmith for his work altogether eighty rupees, or eight pounds." Now, when it is considered that the average balance of monthly pay due to the woman, would probably be, at the very most six shillings, here was a rather startling request, a demand for a sum as advance of wages, which would require more than two years' balance due to refund, leaving nothing at all for other personal

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expenses during that time; so master told her he would think the matter over and *Nalaku va*, come to-morrow. Afterwards he had a consultation with the kangani on the subject, but that knowing fellow only chuckled and said, "Give, I will see that she pays." So the money was given, and the kangani claimed and received from the woman a rupee every month for that answer he gave master. When the news spread that Maila had got eighty rupees from master, in order to make bracelets, oh! were not all the women on the estate jealous and angry. Every afternoon the verandah of the bungalow was full of women, especially the handsome ones, and they all stood and looked at master from behind the posts and corners of the house, until he began to feel somewhat in a state of siege, or rather besieged by an invading force, who, if repelled, would be sure repeatedly to renew the attack until their persevering efforts were successful; indeed he began to feel as if already the house was stormed; but on recovering his self-possession, and putting the question, "What do you all want?" he was told, "*Tattan* was here, and making ornaments." If he got angry and said that he could not supply rupees to make jewellery for all the women on the estate, they would reproachfully tell him that he had given plenty to Maila, and they were as well entitled to an advance as she was, indeed a great deal better, because they knew very well; she was no better than she should be, and none could say that of any of them, who were all most respectable, well conducted women. So, they all became extremely jealous, and told all sorts of lies to the prejudice of Maila's character, which of course reached the ears of that lady, who at once took up her own defence and said, "You see what I can get from master! I am a proper respectable woman, he knows that very well, he can trust me with money." Of course this sharp retaliation was quite enough to create a general row, which ended in a fight, and endless complaints were brought to the bungalow for master to settle, which he could not, until at last a happy thought struck him, which he communicated to the whole of the people at next morning's muster. He said, "The very first disturbance or quarrel, arising about the silversmith, from any parties whatever, will be the cause of my ordering the man off the estate." On hearing this the whole of the people looked very grave and sad, and the kangani shook his long stick at Maila and the other women, saying, "Keep quiet, or—" "Or what?" says Maila, "what have I done, that you shake your stick at me?" Some of the other women

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now said, "Just see her! it is quite evident she is a favourite, and does not she know that she is master's pet, or she never would speak up to the kangani in this way." Of course Maila heard this, and made a dart at the speaker, clutching hold of and tearing her hair, and the commotion divided into two parties, became general, and the quantities of hair, real and false that, were torn off their heads would have made a good stock in a hair-dresser's shop. Clothes and jackets were rent off each others' shoulders, and the foul language and abuse was such as would rather surprise the admirers of "the mild Hindu." No saying what would have happened, or how it all would have ended, if master had not promptly interfered, and ordered them all off to separate works. But the chief work that they did was to talk about the silversmith, and the plans to be adopted in order to procure rupees. They never for a moment decided upon giving up master, only he must be let alone for a time, in order to calm down; they would watch for favourable opportunities, when he was seen to smile, or pass any jocular remark. Then would be their time and opportunity to remind him that there was a silversmith on the estate, and, in the meantime, a trial would be made upon the male relations, or lovers, of their own people. So the wife commenced to draw the attention of her husband to the fact, that somebody else's wife had plenty of bracelets and she was but poorly supplied. The husband replied, that the lady referred to was a good steady worker and had no doubt saved plenty of rupees, and what more natural and proper than that she should convert them into bracelets, if she chose. Why not? "Whereas you," says the unfeeling wretch, "are so lazy and indolent that the work you do does not pay the cost of your rice, for just last pay-day my wages were deducted in two rupees in order to refund your debt on the roll; it is always this way. A *very dear* wife you are to me, for a large proportion of my wages just goes to pay up your debt, and as for that bazar account, which includes two new cloths for yourself purchased by you, without my knowledge, how it is to be settled or what I am to say to the bazar man is a mystery." Here the poor man sat down groaned; and buried his face in his hands, the woman retired to a far-off dark corner of the room, drew her dress over her head and shoulders, and sturdily commenced to weep bitterly. There the happy—no, unhappy—couple sat, presenting anything but a pleasing aspect of matrimonial felicity! All owing to the silversmith. A lady who had for long treated her lover

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as if he was anything but one, or at all events shewing, which no doubt was a mere sham that she did not love him, suddenly to his astonishment and delight became very affectionate. One evening as he was sitting alone under the shade of some plantain trees, resting after the day's work, she came briskly up to the spot and sat down close, very close, beside him. She said it had been a hard day's work, and she was very tired, so of course she leaned on his breast and shoulders, sighing deeply. After a time, her mouth came into close proximity with his, and while he was all in trembling expectation it suddenly turned round to his ear and whispered? "What, what do you think," she whispered at this very interesting and trying moment. *Tattan, velliku vendum* (The silversmith, silver rupees I want). The poor man felt quite overcome in this very trying position? and—but what can you expect in a man—made no reply, but in a rough and rude manner made violent attempts to kiss her. The lady however resisted. It might be that she had considerable experience in the habits of men, and suspected that, if she yielded the kiss first, the man might say afterwards, but not before, that he was sorry, but that he had no rupees at all, no silver! So she buried her face in her lap, at the same time clasping her clenched fingers over the back of her head, which acted as a sort of lever in keeping the head and face down. When this position is adopted, it is in vain for any man whatever to attempt to kiss a woman—against her will. The lover, finding no kiss was to be had without the silver, arranged about supplying it and said that he had some rupees in his box, which he would lend upon security of her bracelets, after they were made and the lady, like a wise lady, struck the iron, when hot, and said, "Bring now, and you can take a kiss." The money was brought and counted out into her hands, and, just as the lover's arms were raised to clasp the neck of the darling, up she starts with a bound and is off, rupees and all, leaving the astonished fond lover to fold in his outstretched arms and kiss the air! But, happily this is an extreme and uncommon view of the case, the feature of which would be more truly represented as being lovers' quarrels and flirtations, which are fundamentally pretty much the same in civilized and uncivilized life, all over the world, of course in accordance with the position, sphere of life and education of those who quarrel. What the Tamil lady said, "No kiss without the silver," is just in a higher degree true in European life, which is, "No daughter for you without the settlements." Love is a tradition of the past, we don't talk of it now. We say

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"How much are you going to settle; as if love is only a secondary consideration. Who originated this abnormal state of matters? Not the lovers. They, if young, are probably quite willing to "marry for love and work for siller," but that won't be allowed by the old folks, many of whom, if they would confess it, would say, "Marry for siller and never mind love, so long as you don't exactly hate each other." Just the very same principle inspired the Tamil lady in her rude way, to say, "The silver first, and then the kiss." We can manage without the love, and not without the silver, and a pretty disgraceful sort of management it generally turns out, if all was known, but they keep it quiet for decency's sake and pretend to be extremely happy before people; not a word can be uttered by either of them, without "my dear" being prefixed.

When the silversmith arrived on the estate, he was located in the very best room: a man of his great importance could not be expected to put up with any mean accommodation. Just directly in front of his room, in the verandah, his forge was put up, a very simple affair. A hole was dug in the ground as a receptacle for the charcoal fire, over which the small ladle that contained the precious metal was put, a small anvil stood on the ground giving forth at regular intervals a ting, ting, tinkling sound as the small hammer resounded upon it as the metal was beat out. A short piece of bamboo lay at his side, to be used when required as a bellows, and the ting, ting, tinkling that proceeded from the forge of the silversmith, adds another to the numerous incidents in our life, never to be forgotten on account of the many recollections entailed by it. The front verandah where he worked was generally a study worth looking. For it was very unlikely that the women would trust him to melt down their rupees without watching him; what if he should appropriate any of the valuable molten metal for his own private use and benefit, what, if they gave him twenty rupees to convert into an ornament, and he only melted down a portion of the sum and kept the rest! and so they must all sit and watch every turn of the hand and knock of the hammer. It need hardly be said, that this was the place for gossip and news, for did not the silversmith tell all the news picked up during his visits to the various estates, in the exercise of his calling. He told them of all the women for whom he had made ornaments, of all the masters who were generous and liberal in advancing rupees, and of those who were mean and stingy. He even told of certain masters, but this was a secret, who supplied him secretly with rupees in order to

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make ornaments, who, when they were finished, took them away. "What could he be doing with them?" eagerly asked all the women, and then they all began to whisper amongst themselves and laugh, some of them even were heard to say, they thought they would give notice to leave at the end of the month and go and engage with the master, who had been having bracelets made. After saying this, they took out a small piece of looking-glass from the end of their cloth, and surveyed their features with great complacency, at the same time asking the silversmith if the women on the estate, where master ordered bracelets, were pretty? "No," says the cunning artificer, "not nearly so nice-looking as any, or all of *you*, indeed I have been over most of the estates and on none of them are to be seen such handsome women as are here," "But I know what that master is going to do with his ornaments," he continued. "What?" was the general and eager shout. He replied, "Just to send them to his own country, as curiosities of our workmanship." All the women now looked very disappointed at this view of the case, shook their heads gravely, and said, they did not believe it, and they all secretly made up their minds, to pay a visit to that estate, the very next Sunday, and find out the whole truth. But none of them told the other of this resolution. After a little time, the hammer of the silversmith went ting, ting, tingle; what cared he, what master was going to do with the ornaments, so long as he was paid for making them. It suddenly struck him, on looking up, as somewhat strange that the whole of the women were gone; but they were not long coming back, all with a pleased satisfied expression of countenance, as if they had been successful in having found out some secret. They said, that it must be quite true that that master intended sending the bracelets to his own country, as curiosities. For they had gone to the dhobi's (washerman's) house, who of course knew all the secrets of the bungalows, and the dhobi had told them, that the last time he took that master's clean clothing to his house, after he had laid them all down on the bed, master counted them, and then opened wide out his wardrobe, in order to lay them there, and while he was doing so the washerman saw quite plainly, on one of the shelves, not only the bracelets, but a quantity of other curious ornaments. No doubt he was making a collection of curiosities, in native jewellery, to send to his own country, and it was quite useless going there to attempt getting presents out of him, upon which, they all echoed, in a decided manner, "Quite useless," and the silversmith,

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on clinching a link on a chain, paused in his labours, clinching the discussion, by saying, in a very decided manner, with a nod and a wink, "Quite useless." It is considered an essential necessity that gentlemen in certain professions, in the "old country," should be married, in order to secure them from the shadow of suspicion, in their interviews upon matters of business with women, and not only from this cause, but also, it is a generally recognized opinion, proved in practical experience, that married men occupy, or are assigned by popular opinion, a higher position in the scale, or grades of society, than the unmarried, which may reasonably be accounted for by the fact that the customs of the country, in a manner prohibit men from marrying, until they have acquired a good position, and a good stock of coin, and it was thus with the silversmith, who had a wife. It would never do for men in his position to be single, exposed to so many jeopardies, in making ornaments for all the lovely ladies; measuring the circumference of their arms and necks, pinching the ears and noses of all the married and unmarried females, who came to his forge, fastening necklaces round the neck, just under the chin, peering with his great eyes, and smacking his lips, just under the noses of his customers, as he was trying to make the catch or clasp fit, for he always seemed to have a difficulty in fitting the catch of a necklace, especially if the girl was pretty. Probably her bright eyes dazzled his, and he could not see properly. In this case, his wife was sure to be close at hand, and would say, "Go away, let me do it," and, before the permission was obtained, she would push in, seize the necklace, which immediately closed with a snap, upon which she said, "There, you stupid, now go to your work," and to the girl, "Your ornaments fit exactly, now go away"; for a very stern and decided woman, with her own sex, was the silversmith's wife. She was a living and walking advertisement of the work he was able to perform, and always a fine-looking woman, for he had, of course, his pick and choice amongst all the girls, who said, "What a fine thing it must be, to be a silversmith's wife!" The skin of her arms could hardly be seen for silver bracelets, and perhaps some gold ones too, her ankles were encircled by rings, with small bells like thimbles, attached, which made a tinkling sound as she walked, but not so loud as her husband's ting, ting, tingle, so that it was far more pleasant to hear, and often, when in a sour and irritable frame of mind, induced by the tinkle of the silversmith in the kitchen, making ornaments for the boy or his wife, for which a most

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certain demand would be made for advances, the hard and severe countenance would relax into a radiant smile, as the silversmith's wife passed by, to visit her husband, for the sound of the tinkling bells on her neck and little ankles suddenly dispelled the gathering gloom. "Music hath charms," and what music can be more charming than the ting, ting, tingle, of the anklet bells! Her toes were covered with rings, to such an extent, that, in order to understand what their appearance was, you would require to suppose, they had all been cut off, and silver ones screwed in their place. Another cause, which rendered the silversmith's wife such an object of envy, was her command of money: she seemed always to have plenty, and, like most in the same position, well knew, also, how to make it more. For, in consideration of a high payment of ready cash, when any great gathering of the coolies took place, on their high days and holidays, she would lend out her ornaments for the occasion; not only this, but she would take from her husband's box, ornaments belonging to others, which they were unable to remove until they could pay for them, and hire them out for a day or two, payment in advance, very likely, even to the owners themselves, who would say, "To-morrow is Sunday, I am going to Gampola, and am ashamed to be seen without my ornaments." The silversmith would say, "Pay, and take them." It would then be explained, that no pay could be forthcoming till pay-day. "Well, the *tattan* would say, pay two shillings a day for the three days you want them, and it must be paid first, take them away, and bring them back on expiration of the time, which was always done, and it used to be a frequent excuse with women, on making their appearance without ornaments, to say, the "*tattan*" had them. Women might sometimes be seen, who had no jewellery of their own, strutting about with hired or borrowed ones from the silversmith, and women might sometimes be seen who had plenty of ornaments kept in pledge at the jeweller's, with their arms quite bare of them, and just fancy their feelings of rage and jealousy, on perceiving their own property worn by another, probably an enemy, or a rival? It must just be swallowed, however, for they could not quarrel with the *tattan*. Well did he know this, he knew his power, and used it too. Even master himself would take advantage of the presence of the *tattan*, the handle, spout, or lid of a metal tea-pot might have become broken, a cruet-stand, a spoon, a candlestick, might require repairs, which the silversmith could easily and neatly solder. As soon as these

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requirements were made known, the tattan would suspend all other work, all the silver and gold was tossed aside, as being of no importance at all, as compared with master's pewter tea-pots, and that very afternoon all the articles would be brought up to the bungalow, repaired, and presented by himself for master's approval. After a satisfactory inspection, master would say, "What is to pay?" On hearing this question, the tattan would start back, as if in a state of extreme astonishment and alarm, just as if, instead of, what to all of us is rather a pleasing question, as it implies a wish on the part of the questioner to pay us something, he had heard some very bad news, or had been asked *to pay*. He then put his fingers over his mouth, and whispered through them, "Master don't think me that sort man. I live on master's ground, make money by his coolies, and my duty is to do all his work for nothing, and thank him for asking me to do, if"—"Very well," he replies, "I am much obliged to you, you can go," but before he goes, he assures master, that any work he wishes to have done, even jewellery—here he looked at the kitchen out-houses—if not taking up very much time he wished no payment at all, and master told him, he would be sure and remember his offer. During the course of next day, ting, ting, tinkle, is heard in the verandah of the bungalow, as master is sitting, writing, and master on looking out, sees the silversmith's wife walking up and down in front, occasionally pausing and looking into all the windows. He feels annoyed at this rude impertinence, walks out and asks her what she wants. She tells him that both herself and the tattan, have no rice, nothing to eat, and he must give them a bushel. He feels done, for, as the silversmith would take no wages for repairing his tea-pots and candlesticks, how can he refuse to give him the rice? Only, the value of the rice would be about six or seven shillings, and, had he made a charge for the work performed, it could not have been more than two or three. It passed quickly through his mind, that, as the silversmith made no charge for the work he had done, it would be rather a mean action on his part to refuse, or make him pay for, the rice! So he gave the order on the storekeeper, and handed it to the woman, who immediately departed, and drew the rice. *After* she had done this, she returned to the bungalow and said, "I want payment for the work the tattan has done for you: the charge is two rupees." Master replied that he had offered to pay him, but payment was refused; besides, she had got more than the value in rice. But the woman said that the rice was altogether a different matter; and would be

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settled before they went away ; very likely there would be more work required to be performed, and as she had the charge of collecting the debts, that two rupees she was determined to have, and would not go away without it, so she sat down at the verandah post, took out a silver box, from which she extracted a quantity of betel leaf, which she put into her mouth, and then commenced to spit all over the verandah. A bold and determined woman was the tattan's, wife. Just then, master's eye caught sight of a white hat ; bobbing up and down amongst the black logs, and well did he know the peculiar shape and form of that hat, he could tell the owner of it, miles off. He was the periya durai (big master) coming to visit him, and would be sure to come direct to the bungalow, in order to get a drink of cold water, after his long walk. What would he think, what would he say, when he saw this obstinate, troublesome wretch, sitting there ? So master makes a bolt into the bungalow, brings out two rupees, which he places in the hand of the tattan's wife, just as the periya durai entered the verandah, and saw the action. But the sight was unnecessary, for that troublesome woman kept looking at the coins, changing them from one hand to the other, and then rung them on one of the drain stones, to see if they were good ones. The periya durai looked stern and severe, and said, "You seem flush of money, making presents to the tattan's wife. I had some thoughts of raising your pay to eight pound six and eightpence per month, but if this is the way you spend your pay, instead of increasing it, I must reduce it ! I must look after you, young man." The young man stammered and protested, said that he was merely paying for repairing a tea-pot, in proof of which, he brought it out, showing the repair, but the "periya durai" only said, "None of your tricks on an old sailor ; the idea of paying two rupees for doing that, why, it would be dear at sixpence." "But," says the youngster, "this is not all, there was the candlestick. "Fiddlestick, fiddle-de-dee," says the periya durai, what do *you* want with candlesticks. Stick to the cracked tumbler lamp, and if it gets smashed altogether, it will be much cheaper to buy a new tumbler at once, than to employ silversmiths and their wives to repair candlesticks—candlesticks indeed !" Here, his stern and severe countenance, purposely assumed for the occasion, gave way, and he burst out into a hearty laugh. On hearing this, the silversmith's wife, who was standing leaning against the verandah post, gazing intently at the black logs, turned sharply round, and asked if *he* had any tea-pots, candlesticks, or plate of

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any description to repair? for a sharp and lively lady was she, with always an eye to business. She then stretched out her arms, and told him to examine her bracelets, and just see what neat work the tattan could perform, while the young master stood in silent amazement, at her audacity. Why, she was not one bit afraid of the periya durai, not she! What with one thing and another, the woman had been a long time in the verandah, and in pops the silversmith himself, to see what has become of her. On seeing the periya durai, he claps his hands, and makes a profound salam, and, as in the prosecution of his calling he had picked up a smattering of English, said, "Master please order the sinna durai not to detain my wife so long at the bungalow, when I send her with a message." Then turning to his wife, he said, "Have you got that one rupee I sent you to get, for repairing the tea-pot and candlestick?" "Ho, ho," shouts the young master, "one rupee was it! Why, she said two, and has got them too!" Come, come, give up that two shillings," and before the big master and the silversmith understood what was wrong, to their horror and astonishment, the sinna durai had caught hold of the woman, and commenced to unroll the cloth that was bound round her waist, in order to get hold of the money underneath it. The tattan seized hold of a broom and rushed to the assistance of his wife, and the periya durai laid hold of him, and during the general turmoil a number of rupees dropped down on the verandah, from the woman's cloth: the sinna durai pounced upon one of them, and triumphantly placed it in his pocket, and the scramble was at an end. Had the silversmith's wife been like any other woman, she would have got out of the scrape by shedding tears, but she did nothing of the sort: she broke out into such a volley of abuse against the two masters, that even the tattan himself seemed quite shocked, as with one hand he seized hold of the hair of her head, with the other he grasped her shoulder, and thus, keeping her well in front of him, pushed her on in front of him, until they disappeared round the corner, and after that, they heard her scream out violently: no doubt he was beating her. Just as the periya durai was going away, a coolie came running up, in a breathless state of great excitement, and said, the silversmith had been beating his wife, that she was dying, that she was dead, he had killed her. So they all hurried away to his room, round which a large crowd of people had assembled, all looking very grave and sad. On pushing through them, into the room, the tattan's wife was seen, stretched out on the floor, on her back,

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nearly a dozen women were all sitting round her, supporting her head, stroking her limbs, moaning, groaning, and rocking to and fro, she certainly had all the appearance of being dead. But the tattan's was busy at his work, ting, ting, tingle, seeming quite unconscious, and careless about the murder he was accused of having committed. On being told in very harsh terms, to get up, and see the result of his cruel treatment, that his wife was dead, without even pausing in his work he said, "Never mind, my wife has been dead very often, I am quite accustomed to her sudden decease, and feel very easy on the subject. Take no notice of her, and her life, in all its peculiar phases, will soon return : a great deal too soon for my own personal comfort. Dead!" Ting. "Dead !" Ting, tingle. "I wish she was. Too good news to be true." Ting, ting, tingle. The conductor now came up, to see the cause of all this unhappy disturbance, saying, "Let me in, let me see her." He pushed all the women away, raised her arms, but they fell powerless, her neck seemed to be broken, and could not support the head. He then said in a loud voice, "Yes, she is quite dead, and must be buried at sunset. I will go and set on coolies to dig the grave," but not a motion or movement did the corpse make, and says he, "You are surely not going to bury all these fine silver ornaments. No doubt the tattan will be taking another wife next week, and will of course require them all for her." A strange sound was now heard proceeding out of the mouth of the dead body, very similar to the grinding of teeth. Could it be possible, that the bare possibility of this dire contingency, acted so strongly on the spirit of the dead wife, as to induce its return to the body, in order to prevent it ! But the spirit again departed, leaving the body as before. The conductor, a rough, hard man, again said, "It is getting late, we cannot put off any more time, strip off her bracelets, and all the ornaments." They caught hold of her arms, and tried to open the bracelet clasps, but the arms were very soon jerked behind her back, and the corpse being, aware that all deception was now useless, got up, laid hold of the cooking chatties, commencing to wash rice as if nothing had happened, only she looked very sour and sulky, and did not speak, but the tattan's, wife was not the sort of lady to remain any length of time speechless, for she suddenly burst out into a torrent of abuse, against all the women in the room, asking them, what they wanted there. "Get out of this, every one of you ; no doubt you are all sorry I am not dead, for, when you heard I was, you all

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hurried here in hot haste, to try who would be appointed as my successor, off with you, you vesimachals. Ting, ting, tingle went the tattan's, forge. "Alive again," says he, "no mistake about that, all alive ho. I wish she *was* dead." Being irritated, these last words were unconsciously uttered in rather a loud tone, and heard by the "*she*" referred to. Ting, ting, tingle, went the tattan's ears, as a very small wooden stool was suddenly dashed against them, and falling on the charcoal fire, upset the crucibles, sending all the molten silver amongst the ashes, the tattans wife was horrified at the result of her rash action; for although a virago in temper, she had a keen eye to business, and a quick perception of the value of silver, and it was probably owing to her good qualities in these respects, that her husband passed over and excused her failings in temper but this last act was too sore a trial, and even the woman seemed afraid of what she had done, because the man did not get up, beat, or abuse her, as she expected he would, but sat still, quite calm, and composed, looking at her; the stillness before the storm, a sure sign, that when the storm does come it will be no trifle. That very afternoon, a woman was seen walking hurriedly away along the road, with an old coarse dirty cloth enveloped over her head; not a jewel, or ornament of any sort was to be seen on her neck, arms, or ankles her head was hanging down, as if ashamed to look up. What plain common looking person could this be? Can she be, is it possible, yes, she is the tattans, wife, probably away to have a bath in the stream, and left all her fine clothes and ornaments in the house, But she did not go down to the stream at all: she borrowed an axe in one of the end apartments of the lines, and proceeding some distance out into the clearing, commenced to cut fire wood! After a bundle was cut, she blew with her breath on her hands, and dipped them in a running stream, then gathered up the sticks, strapped them on her back, over her bare shoulders, and trudged away back with her burden to the tattans house. As she entered, and threw down the firewood, ting, ting, tingle, went the hammer, but he never even looked up. She lay down under a cumblie, in a far corner of the room, and concealed herself from all the visitors at the forge; but she did not lie long there, for the tattan said, "My charcoal is about done get up, go away out, and bring in more." Now, there used to be a small boy, from the lines, always dangling in attendance upon the lady, as a sort of page, who was also in the habit

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of bringing in charcoal, when it was required, but this small boy, as is the manner of small boys, and indeed big ones too, when he saw his superior in disgrace, had taken the opportunity of taking his liberty, and was not to be found. On hearing the request for more charcoal, the lady screamed out in a shrill tone of voice, "Podiyan" (boy), but the only answer to the call was the rough, gruff tone of the man's voice, as he said in a determined manner, which could admit of no dispute, "Go yourself, quick." The woman started up, took hold of the empty charcoal bag, and ran away up the hill to gather charcoal. While doing so, a heavy shower of rain came on, and wet her, not to, but through, the skin. When the bag was filled, she raised it to, and set it on, her head, and the charcoal that was washed out by the rain water, settled amongst her beautiful well kept hair, in which she took so much pride; it streamed down, over her neck and shoulders, there leaving marks, in comparison with which the dusky skin, was fair indeed, as she entered the room with her burden, the tattan never looked up. The ting, ting, tingle, did not even cease, as he said, "Dry charcoal is bad, we must take the opportunity of this rain, in order to lay in a stock of wet. Go out, and bring more." His words, or rather order, was scarcely audible, for a peal of thunder crashed right overhead, followed by such a pelting of rain, that the roads and gutters were all running like streams. But, for all that, the order was heard, for the tattan's wife stepped boldly out into the storm without a word; she did as she was told. "After a storm comes a calm," and great peace and comfort reigned in the tattan's room; his wife completely gave up all gadding about; she discovered that the house was dirty and uncomfortable, so, instead of spending for a coolie to clean it up, she commenced doing it herself with her own hands. She brought in mud, clay, and sand, plastered all the walls, floor, and even the front verandah. A first-rate tidy housewife was she, when she liked, or had an object in view. Her object was to get back her clothes and ornaments, and, as her original bold conduct had proved unavailing, she now tried a different course entirely—servile submission. That night the tattan's, rice and curry was particularly good; it had been purposely cooked with the greatest care, made of the very materials of which he was fondest, so that he ate an unusually large quantity. He was now sitting gazing into a bright stick fire, which sparkled and crackled in the centre of the room. His wife was rolling about in her hands a dark-looking leap, until it assumed the form of a roughly made cigar; she then

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pulled a small light string off the edge of her cloth, bound it round the mouth end, to keep it tight, she then wet her finger with spittle, rubbing it all over the cigar, until it was quite moist, then putting it in her own mouth, and lifting a burning stick from the fire, lighted the cigar, and herself took a few puffs, just to see that it would draw. After she was certain it was all right, she comes up behind the *tattan*, and, without saying a word, puts the lighted cigar in his mouth. The man never uttered a word, or moved a muscle, but puffed away. The woman now sits down on the ground beside him, and leans her cheek upon his knee, a very nice sketch it would be for a painter, on matrimonial reconciliation! Two bright eyes gazed into the hard stern ones of the man, two pretty lips slowly moved into his rough moustache, then they muttered something about bracelets, necklaces, and anklets. The *tattan* nodded, and put his arm round her waist, listened to a woeful story, how all the women on the estate were laughing at his wife, saying, the lowest-caste cooly women were better dressed than she, that she was no better than a cooly, and all she was good for was to carry firewood and charcoal for her husband. A dark angry frown passed over the face of the *tattan*, he threw the end of his cigar into the fire, put his arm round his wife's waist and kissed her! A triumphant gleam of satisfaction passed over the countenance of the woman; she knew her troubles were come to an end, and that her tactics of assumed patient submission had gained the victory. So she spoke no more, in case of spoiling what she had achieved; she only put her cloth over her face, and wept, or pretended to. The *tattan* rises up puts a key into a box, opens it, taking out the bracelets, necklaces and anklets with his own hands he fastens them all on where they ought to be. The woman makes no movement, is quite passive in his hands, and, instead of rejoicing at the reconciliation, strange to say, continues to weep and sob more bitterly than before, actually choking. Tenderly the *tattan* inquires why his darling is breaking her heart, and tenderly is informed that a number of the *kanganis'* wives had all got new dresses, in which they appeared at the bazar last Sunday, and how can she go out or be seen with any of her old ones? They would just sneer, and say." The *tattan* considers any old rag good enough for you. "He promptly replied. The *tattan* considers nothing of the sort: on the contrary, he considers that the best cloth ever possessed by the head *kangani's* wife is not good enough for his. Go down to the bazar to-morrow, buy the best and most ex-

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pensive cloth he has, silk if you like, tell him to put it down to my account, the bazar man will be proud to give credit to the *tattan*." That night, domestic peace and happiness reigned supreme in that smoky room. To the astonishment of all the men, and the envy of all the women on the estate, the *tattan's* wife flaunted about more gaudily dressed and decorated than ever, and of course many were the searching questions put, as to how she had so easily managed her husband ; but she would not tell, so, as some of our readers may feel some curiosity on the subject, the writer will give his opinion. "That's rather too much !" some will cry out ; "a fig for your opinion : what do you know on the subject ?" We know a good deal of human nature, and that, both in Asiatic and European, making due allowances for the difference in civilization, education, position, is just the same ; the tap-root of human nature is always prone in the same direction, whether the tree be cultivated, or wild ; presents the same phases ; even in the feeding roots the general appearance of the two trees is, even frequently, very similar, the chief and great distinction being in the fruit they bear. All women, wives of course, of whatever nation, caste, or class, they may be, if they set the right way about it, can easily manage their husbands, "How, how ? oh tell us," many will exclaim, for no doubt many have given over their husbands, as being perfectly unmanageable, because all their constant efforts to do so have failed. Give them all up, or at all events never attempt forcible or threatening ones ; *pretend* that you have no wish, inclination, and most certainly no ability to manage him, when he is on his "high horse," let him run his race, and he will all the sooner become exhausted ; then watch his softened and tender moments, suggest, coax, recommend, never dictate. If all these resources prove unavailing, one unfailing one is left you, but don't practise it too often, or it will lose its effect, only put it in force in rare cases of dire extremity. We mean tears, but don't "greet" to much, or too often, or they will lose their effect. Just to expound our meaning, a similar instance in civilized life of the quarrel of the *tattan* and his wife may be given. A married lady and gentleman have had "some words," the man sits himself down right in front of the fire, puts up his feet over the grate, thus occupying the whole space in front, with magazine and paper-knife in hand ; he is, or pretends to be, deeply engaged ; the lady is sitting at the window, with her elbows on a small round table, her chin resting in the palms of her hands, her eyes gazing out intently, upon

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neither she nor any one else knows what. There they sit motionless, not a word or gesture from either. This may last for a long time, just as the strength of the dispute may happen to have been. Probably, the lady will get up first approach the fire-place, saying it is cold. The gentleman withdraws the foot, next to her, which was struck up over the grate, bringing it down to the heart-rug. His companion sits down on the rug, somewhat in a similar manner as has already, in a previous chapter, been described as after the custom of the coolie, only, that the gentleman's leg forms a very comfortable and natural arm to the chair she has adopted. She leans her own arm on this arm, and again says, it is cold, but there is no response; it is quite evident that the heart of that horrid man is cold also ! She now remarks that the rain has ceased, and what a beautiful sunset it is. The "some words" had been occasioned by a refusal on the part of the gentleman to allow his carriage and horses to be taken out, to drive the lady to a tea drinking, on account of the rain. The carriage was new, and would get spoilt, and the horses, very valuable and expensive animals, would catch cold. Still no reply ; but he becomes somewhat restless. She gazes up into his face gradually the two faces approach each other, until—he rises up, and rings the bell. "John, tell Thomas to put to the horses, and bring the carriage round directly, and—my dear, run up stairs, and get ready." The dear needs no further instructions, for she is dressed, and downstairs, long before the carriage drives up. If the gentleman had resolutely continued obstinate to this successful appeal of the lady, she had still a final and unfailing resource, which he could not have resisted: she would have laid her face down on the soft arm, and wept. Of course he would have tenderly raised the face, of course he would have risen up, and rung the bell, and told John to tell Thomas, but the lady was not reduced to this final necessity, for she was wise, and wisely deferred it, until all other attempts had failed. This little incident in domestic lifemay here be considered somewhat out of place, and a digression from the routine of our tale, but it is given in order to show that human nature, woman's nature, and man's also, is very much the same everywhere, only, the lady's and gentleman's were on a more refined and polished scale than the tattans, and his wife. The quarrels and disputes of the former, owing to the privacy of English home life, are seldom or never known to the public. If they were, if the public had known what had taken place in that room, as they knew what had taken place between the latter, they would probably have just been as much

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surprised to have heard the order given for the carriage, as the coolies were to see the tattan's wife gadding about in her silk clothes and bracelets after the serious dispute she had with her husband ; and it is often the case, that we hear people commenting on the follies and foibles of others, in a very severe way, because they have become known, never at all thinking that many of their own deeds and actions, should they happen to become exposed, would present much more curious and absurd phases of life, than the ones to which their attention has been called. Many features in oriental domestic life are exposed to remark and criticism, just because that life is not so private as European, and remarks are passed on the frequently apparently different characteristics which they present, remarks, which may be, are unjust, because the position and circumstances under which they are made are very dissimilar, in every respect. Before judging or condemning the actions of any people, or even individuals, let us first be careful, with wisdom and consideration to scan the correct position which they hold in life, as also their true attainments in knowledge or education, in refinement, or civilization, for one of the greatest errors that is often made in the management of Asiatics, say coolies, is in judging them by our own fixed standards of principle, because they do not nearly come up to that. How *can* you expect it ? They are all pronounced to be a pack of incorrigible thieves, liars, and debauchees. Now, a man, or a woman, must be very bad indeed, who is utterly destitute of all correct feelings ; he or she must have some, hidden, it may be choked up, and concealed somewhere. Take a little trouble and search them out. If you find the smallest seed or germ of any sort, endeavour to develop and cultivate it, until it reaches some maturity, and becomes self-supporting, even extending its influence to and upon others. Some, it may be many, will thoughtlessly exclaim, " Just coming it too strong now, taking trouble to investigate and search out the characters of coolies !" Yes, and just upon the general principle, that all, in any position of power and authority whatever, under any circumstances, if they themselves expect to succeed, and attain success in their calling, must, to a certain extent, study the character and various characteristics of their subordinates, and it often results, when this line of policy is altogether omitted or ignored by an employer, he, although exact, just, even lenient, in every, or many respects, fails utterly, in favour, or popularity, with his people, who, if asked the reason, would possibly find some difficulty in rendering a just reply. All they say is, " We don't like

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him." This feeling is often to be found, even in a higher social scale, amongst neighbours. How often have many of us had neighbours, against whom no charge could be made ; they were all right, friendly, neighbourly, yet still there was "a something," we could not well tell what. All we could tell was that we never could become intimate friends ; the "something," probably was, several points in our friends' natural character and disposition at variance with our own, a want of general community of sentiment. Allowance must be made for this in our dealings with Asiatics, for it is not likely we can have any community of sentiment with them. We will say the way to manage your male subordinates is briefly comprehended in being inflexibly, *just* without severity, and as for the females, just manage them the best way you can, taking due and very careful precaution, that they don't manage you !—for, if you are careless on this point, depend upon it they will do it, without your knowledge. Remember the tattan's wife, don't forget how *she* managed her husband, and beware !

It is thirty years after ; we are sitting with elbows on the table, face buried in the palms of the hands, in dreamy reminiscences of bygone years, quite oblivious of where we are, when a long forgotten sound strikes upon the ear : "Ting, ting," tingle." "The tattan"—escapes from the lips, on the spur of the moment, just a temporary flash of the mind. Mechanically, the eyes are raised to the window, expecting to see the tattan's wife, standing in the verandah, with her nose pressed flat against the window pane, wanting to know, if master has any old tea-pots, or candle sticks to repair ; but the senses soon swing correct, as to where we are, on seeing that there is no verandah, and the snow is falling thick and fast. "And were no doubt bitterly disappointed," some of our young friends will maliciously exclaim ! But don't judge of others, as you would have felt yourselves ; remember the blood does not ting, ting, tingle, in our veins now, as it does in yours. If you live till thirty years after this, then you will understand it, but now you cannot. In this, as in every other position in life, practical experience is necessary, but unlike many other positions, practical experience is far from desirable ; may your life be long and well spent, before you acquire it !—Once more, "ting, ting, tingle," the door bell !—and a well known voice is heard to exclaim, "Is he in ? I want to see

P. D. MILLIE."

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CHAPTER XLVII.

“VANNAN VANDARADU”—“TO WHAT BASE USES MAY WE COME”—OBTAINING MONEY UNDER FALSE PRETENCES—THE BOY’S RAIMENT—LETTING OUT CLOTHES—A RUN-AWAY WIFE—A DUENNA AND HER CHARGE—A KIND-HEARTED PLANTER—VERY LIKELY—A PRYING SERVANT—ONE IN THE EYE—THE RULING PASSION—A TRAP—A CATASTROPHE—VIRTUE’S REWARD—A GOOD MASTER—COCONUT OIL—MISSING CLOTHES—THE TAPPAL-RUNNER—A BAD COUGH—TRADING ON HER OWN ACCOUNT—THE FLOWERED VEST.

“*Vannan vandaradu*” (the washerman has come), was the exclamation of the boy as he walked smartly into the bedroom, with a small memorandum book, very dirty on its covers, in the one hand, and a pencil in the other, followed by the washerman himself, who carried a large bundle of clothes, resting upon his breast, to which it was clasped tight by both his arms.

“No more than need,” master joyfully exclaims, “for such a whole lot of dirty, disgustingly filthy rags, as the house is filled with, I never did see.” Why, just the other day, when a great row was raised about that abominable tablecloth, which must have been on active service twice a day, for the last two months, to his agreeable surprise, dinner was served that evening, upon, although not a clean, yet certainly, a very much cleaner one. Being hungry, no time was taken to ask where it was got, so, after the appetite was appeased, feeling *then* some curiosity on the subject, the tablecloth was examined, and had very much the appearance of a suspiciously dirty sheet. The boy, on being called and questioned, most distinctly said, that he had taken it off the bed. “But, master don’t be angry. Master just take good care and not spill any curry on it and I will take care, so that no crumbs, or grains of rice, stick to it, and put it back upon the bed again, before master goes to sleep. No, no, never think any sorry; master never know any difference.” But master’s wrath was now on the ascending scale. “What!” says he, taking up the table napkin between his fore-finger and thumb, letting it fall loosely out, clear of the tablecloth, “what have you been doing with this? Do you consider this fit to wipe my mouth and fingers with?”. “Master forget,” was the prompt reply; “master know very well” (for master is always supposed to know everything very well, except what is intended he should not know) “this morning, when I ask for a kitchen towel, master did not give.” Upon giving

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utterance to this unanswerable argument, as if in contempt at master's ignorance, he whips up the table napkin, placing it, as he would have done a towel under his armpit, guiltless of either shirt or jacket,, as also, probably, of both soap and water, for the last week, saying, "What can do? That washerman never come." If the plates and dishes, knives, forks, or spoons, were not properly cleaned, why, it was all the fault of the washerman: not that *he* was in any way expected to undertake the duties of the kitchen coolies, but, that he had not brought the towels, to clean them with; even the table napkins were all "too much dirty," as "master could see very well." But enough has been written to give our readers some general idea of the great importance of the washerman, and what unpleasant results were likely to arise, from any lengthened delay, on his part, in making his appearance with master's clothes. Both the boy and kitchen coolie also shared in the delight of the arrival of *vannan*, having probably some lurking impression, that now some advance of wages could be procured, in order to pay him. For, if there was any point upon which master could possibly be justified in, or prevailed upon, to give an advance of wages, surely, the subject of personal cleanliness on behalf of his servants was one. But, what if master should boldly ask the washerman, how much his servants owed him, in order that he might—be regulated in giving the amount that was—not requested, but demanded, and should be told, with a look of astonished amazement, nothing at all? Such a dread contingency must be previously provided for, on the part of the servant, and so, it would be previously arranged between the two worthies, that the one was to support the statement of the other, for, of course, a consideration. All the plan, having been arranged in the kitchen, took effect in this way. The washerman, having completed his business with master, still stood in the verandah, and did not go away. Master, feeling some irritation at this state of matters, would come out and ask him what he wanted, the only reply to which would be, "Master's servant." "Well," master exclaims, "he is in the cookhouse; don't stand there, staring into my office window; be off with you." Another brief ejaculation would be, "Did n't pay." A light now flashes across master's mind, and he asks, "How much does he owe you?" "One pound," replies the washerman, "and if it is not paid I cannot wash any more for master's servant," said, in a manner which would admit of neither argument nor dispute. "Boy," shouts master. Sharp came the reply, "*Hajar*," and just as sharp did he present himself. "Boy,

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how much money do you owe the washerman?" Without a moment's hesitation, "One pound" is the reply; "please pay, and charge against my account." This, of course, is done, and the washerman retires to the kitchen with the boy. Quite natural, the reader may say, just to come to a proper settlement, and give and take a receipt. But we must give quite a different, explanation upon this transaction, because really, the boy did not owe the washerman anything at all, who was the means of procuring the money for his friend, by telling a little harmless lie, and, upon the successful result of the scheme, a discount, on rather premium, of a rupee to himself. But high words are now heard proceeding from the kitchen. The boy, having taken the money, offers the washerman a shilling, which is indignantly refused, and one rupee demanded. Master calls them both into the verandah, and asks what all this turmoil is about. The boy, with tears in his eyes, complains bitterly of the washerman, who says he cannot bring his clean clothes for some days, after having received payment of one pound, and the washerman, in self-defence, asks, how he can be expected to bring the clothes when, the money, which has just been paid, must all go to buy soap and starch. Besides, master is the first consideration; his clothes must be done first. They are ordered away, and told to make less noise in their disputes, but, whether they made less or more, and settled their quarrel or not, there was one point upon which they were thoroughly agreed, so thoroughly, that the one never for a moment feared that either of them would tell master the truth. But appearances must be kept up, in order that the trick may be kept up, with mutual advantage to both parties. So, the next day, the boy appears in a fine clean set of clothes, supplied for the occasion; but it was only for a few days, after which they disappeared, and he became dirtier than ever, and to all the questions put, as to where were his clothes, the sole reply was, "At dhobi's."

Here, without doubt, the truth is spoken, for *the*, although not *his*, clothes were at the washerman's, undergoing a second, perhaps third, washing, or more, before being presented to their rightful owner. For payment in the exercise of his calling was not the sole profit to the washerman: he rented out the clothes, entrusted to him for washing, on hire, at so much per day, or for an occasion, and the owner, on receiving back his clean clothes, would be under happy ignorance of their having been worn by others, the delay in receiving them arising, of course, solely from the wet state of the weather, the want of soap, starch, &c., or, from his wife having run off, from

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which latter cause his work had either been delayed from the want of her usual assistance, or from his own absence, in search of the runaway, to the neglect of his daily avocations. Who knows, perhaps secret arrangements might have been entered into, between the happy couple, when a number of customers were clamouring for their clean clothes, which were all let out on hire, that the wife should run off, and, of course, the man pursue her, both returning just at the very time when several large quantities of the rented out clothes were due, in order to wash and return them to the proper owners, with the remark, "Sorry kept so long : what can do ? Wife run away, and I run after her. Now, I catch her, and make plenty punish. Wash all the clothes very fast. Master must excuse ; that wife make plenty trouble." We once had dealings with a washerman who had three wives, and he must not only have kept them at work but looked after them well too, for he was the best and most punctual that we ever employed. His real original wife was a very old lady, but active enough for all that, especially with her tongue. But our readers will perhaps very naturally say, " You need not inform us on this point : we require no information as to the point of a Tamil old lady's tongue, being perfectly aware that it is extremely sharp pointed." This chief wife was old enough to be the man's grandmother, for he himself was a very young man. So her chief duties, as wife in chief, were to look after and act as *duenna* over the other two wives, who were young and pretty. The wives undertook the duties of carrying about the clean clothes, to the respective owners of them, and during these excursions, of course the young ones, being strong and active, were made to carry them, the old lady bringing up the rear, of course carrying nothing except a large cotton umbrella, swung over her shoulder, somewhat in the Mrs. Gamp style. Arrived at the verandah of the bungalow, her onerous duty of *gouvernante* commenced in right good earnest. Having furled the huge umbrella, and set it up against the verandah post, she lifted the load of clothes from the head of her charming convoy, and stared fixedly at master, who, seeing the arrival, had come out of the room. Possibly—it is human nature—he would fix his eyes on the handsome young girl, and the *duenna*, of course, would fix her eyes upon him, feeling no doubt some degree of irritation that *her* presence commanded no attention at all. Perhaps master would unconsciously exclaim, " A regular deer : eyes like a fawn." " Deer and fawn indeed," exclaims the wrathful old lady. " Come, come, none of *your*

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fawning. Call the boy, and take in your clothes, and"—speaking to the "fawn"—"you just step out, and sit down behind the back corner of the bungalow, until I call you to lift and carry away the dirty clothes." Upon hearing this order, the "fawn" hung her head, and reluctantly did as she was bidden. But master laughed, and said, "Why, old girl, whatever are you jealous about? The girl caught my attention, merely as being a stranger. Do you think I could ever cast a sheep's eye upon a child of a creature like that? The girl has the promise of eventually becoming a handsome woman, but you need never be jealous of her, for it is impossible either she, or any one else, can ever excel or even attain the perfection of beauty and symmetry of form, which all who have any correct opinion of female beauty declare that *you* possess." Upon hearing this the old lady adjusted her cloth under her chin, and took a chew of betel, in performing which act it became quite apparent that her mouth was innocent of teeth; but master said, "Why do you eat that nasty stuff? It will spoil all your fine teeth." But the lady said never a word, or, when she did, took great care in keeping her lips as compressed as possible. She now calls her young and beautiful companion to come forward, boldly, and "not be afraid of master; no need for that: master is a gentleman of great discrimination, and excellent taste, in regard to the personal looks and general accomplishments of the female sex." But master declared he could not look at the trifling creatures: he would just count out the dirty clothes to her, which was all she was good for, and, in the time he was doing this, would the old lady just step into the kitchen, and get some hot coffee. "The dear young gentleman," she exclaims, "how kind, for I am so fond of coffee." So away she goes, and spent so much time in drinking coffee, and gossiping with the servants, that her young charge had eventually to take charge of her, and, after a great deal of difficulty, get her out of the kitchen. Master now gave the old lady a cheroot, at which she was so pleased, that nothing would serve her, except to carry the dirty clothes herself. "Master so kind, no master like ours; an honour to carry his clothes, an honour of which you are altogether unworthy," as she snatched the bundle out of the hands of the fawn, took hold of her by the hand, and thus the two departed, the elder carrying the burden, and leading the younger. "Boy," shouts out the master, "be quick and bring in a cup of coffee, and that heel of the last of the bread: I must be off to work." But the boy informs master

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that there is neither coffee nor bread. "All done." "All done! How is this?" "Why, master know very well, this is Friday; and forget: send that old mother the washerman's wife to eat bread, and drink coffee. All done, finish; and think master do it on purpose to have some funny talk, and so, make coffee very hot, too hot for *amma's* mouth, and she take plenty long time to drink. Then, when say, 'No time to drink this hot coffee,' I say, 'Take this bread,' for master see, that old woman too much fond of bread, and if it had not been for that coffee and bread, then master could not have laughed and talked with the girl so long, in the verandah." And the boy drew himself up, looked grave, and said, "Master know very well." But master said, very testily, "Do you mean to insinuate any improprieties on my part?" The prompt reply was, "Everything master do must be quite proper; it is impossible for our master even to think anything wrong. Master is wise and very considerate. Quite understand how master think not proper to send that pretty woman in the kitchen to drink coffee, amongst the men servants." The boy then retired to his own premises, where he and the kitchen coolie entered into a long talk about master, the washerman, and his wives. The boy, who had only been newly engaged, was always anxious for information on every point about master, and commenced to "pump" the kitchen coolie, who was an old hand at the house. Says he, "I cannot understand this at all, why our master, who is a very young man, should be so partial to old, very old women. Now there was that ugly wretch, whom he actually sent into kitchen, to have bread and coffee, and kept the young one standing in the verandah, talking to her, of course, about the clothes, and never asked her to take anything at all! I think master is very angry when any women come into the verandah to speak, for if I happen to be cleaning the house inside, and of course looking out of the window, he always says something very angry, and sends me away. I don't understand master at all." When the kitchen coolie heard this he suddenly jumped up, seized hold of an axe, rushed out of the kitchen, and commenced vigorously an assault upon the trunk of a tree, in order to cut some firewood, but the hacking and hewing upon that timber log did not produce a sound loud enough to conceal his laughter. It was the first and last time that that kitchen coolie was ever known to have laughed, and he never could be prevailed to tell what the subject of his thoughts was that caused that laughter, only, several times, when the boy was speaking to him on the subject, he said

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very gravely, "Don't you be watching master out of windows, and from behind doors, I know his way; he does not like it, and you may think he does not notice you, but he sees you well enough. If you persist in this line of conduct, you will never get any cash advances from him; indeed he may tell you some day to go away, that he is getting another servant! I never watch master. What do I care what he does? I think he does not want me to see anything, I make a great noise, and say I am away down to the store to get some rice and coffee, and master please see that the dog does not burst open the kitchen door, and eat all the rice, but the truth is, there is no rice to eat: I only tell this, to let master know I am away, and so I can always get advance of pay, whenever I like: indeed, just now, I am under two months' advance, and intend asking for another month's soon, and will get it too. You won't catch me watching master, and you just take my advice, and don't." Here he resumed the cutting of firewood, and the conversation dropped, but it did not drop out of the boy's mind, who considered over it a good deal, and was convinced that the kitchen coolie was right. Notwithstanding this conviction, so deeply rooted in his nature was the confirmed habit of watching master, that the determination he resolved upon was, to watch master more than ever, but to do it as slyly and conceal it as much as possible, so that while watching him more closely than ever, he would cleverly conceal it, and master would never know he took the least notice of any of his actions. In the bedroom stood a couch, upon which master often lay down for a short time during the day, when he came in very tired. This couch stood against the wall just exactly opposite the door. The boy was very often puzzled to find out, when his master was not in the sitting-room, or front verandah, whether he had gone out to work, so he set to work making experiments, and, by just moving the couch a very little, set it in such a position, that, by applying his eye to the keyhole of the door, he could at once see if master was lying down upon it. It used to be a very common custom, and probably still is, for the planter, when he came in from work, to take off his shoes in the verandah, and insert his feet into nice cool easy slippers, in which he lounged about the house. Before again going out, of course, he slipped his feet out of the slippers, and into the shoes, so that either one or other of the pairs was always in a convenient position, just under the post. It can thus be readily understood that the boy by merely peeping round the end of the side verandah could at once perceive whether master

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was in or out. If the former, of course the shoes were there; if the latter, the slippers. This state of matters was as a general rule; but, as, to all general rules, there are occasional exceptions, so also in this case, it once happened, that both a pair of shoes and also slippers were on the usual spot. The boy, on taking his customary peep, and seeing both pairs standing where he expected to perceive one, very naturally felt somewhat put out as to the correct result of his observation, so he went to the bed-room door, which opened out the back-verandah, stooped down, and applied his eye to the keyhole. The real state of matters was, that master had, without shoes or slippers, in his stockings soles, gone into his bedroom, and lain down on the couch, and, just as the boy was peeping through the keyhole, had got up, and was proceeding through the sitting-room, into the back-verandah, in order to call out for a light to his pipe; and so it happened, that, just as he reached the back-door, his eyes caught the boy in a most peculiar position, so:—He was bending forward both his hands resting on his knees, the lower extremity of his back protruding well out, his eye close up to the keyhole of the door. In this position he appeared quite fixed, seemingly quite at a loss how to fathom this very unusual mystery, for no doubt he saw that the couch was empty, and, as far as he could scan, the whole bedroom too, and he was perfectly certain master was neither in the sitting-room nor in the verandah, and, yet strange to say, both his shoes and slippers were there! A wicked thought flashed through master's mind. Quickly and softly he returned to the bedroom by the same way he had come out, and as he passed by the office, he took a small glass syringe from the medicine chest, which was in fine working order, having just been very recently in use, and, as back luck (for the boy) would have it, a tea-cup, with a strong solution of bluestone (blue vitriol), was standing close at hand. He placed the point of the syringe into this solution, into which a quantity of it was sucked up; then, in order to see it worked all right, with the tip of his thumb the syringe was suddenly compressed, sending out at the point a jerk of the solution, proving he was no novice in working the instrument which was again filled, full as it would hold. He then steps swiftly and softly into the bedroom, applies the point of the syringe to the keyhole, and compresses his thumb with great force, the immediate result of which was—a loud scream, a rush, then a great silence, and as silence in the kitchen was such a very unusual thing, he thought it would be a pity to interrupt it,

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so took no notice at all, but went out to work; and, all the kanganis and coolies that afternoon keenly observed amongst themselves, that master was in particularly good humour, even jocular. The work was all well done, in sufficient quantity, so that the people, presuming upon this pleasant frame of mind, ventured to remark that it was four o'clock. On hearing this he pulled out his watch, and said, no, it was only three, but, as they had all been very diligent and attentive and had done a very good day's work, he would let them off, merely as an encouragement as to what might happen very often, if they continued to be equally conscientious during his absence. He did not care about four o'clock; it was the amount of work they got through with that guided him, so they all proceeded from the working place in very good humour, homeward-bound. Now, the boy, just about four o'clock; always came out of the kitchen to watch master coming from the working place. The result of which was that the coffee was always hot, set already on the table, just as he entered the bungalow. But in this particular instance, as he had been sooner than usual, or, it may be, the worthy servant's eyesight not being in fit condition for watching, there had been none. Be this as it may, when master entered the house he missed the usual sight of the coffee-pot and its appendages; the table was bare. "Boy," shouts he, "bring coffee," and shortly afterwards the kitchen coolie comes in holding the coffee-pot by the spout and handle, in the fashion, setting it down on the edge of the table, and sugar and cup at the opposite end. "Where is the boy?" says master. The kitchen coolie looked him full in the face, and, as he did so, his lips parted, shewing two beautiful rows of white teeth from ear to ear. He then as if ashamed at his boldness, placed the fingers of both hands over his teeth, hung down his head, and ran off without saying a word. Some coffee was now poured out, which was just coloured water, and cold. "Ahem," cogitates master, "but the watching had its uses after all; better to put up with it, than with this bad stuff. Mutu, send the boy here." He soon made his appearance, with a handkerchief tied over his eye, which, on removal, presented an inflamed appearance, but it was evident there was nothing the matter, or, if there was, the root of the ailment proceeded more from shame and confusion than anything else. Master then proceeded to the medicine-chest, and, carefully avoiding the solution of bluestone, picked out a small bottle with a glass stopper, which was used as a soothing counter-acting effect upon the former, moistened a little lint, applied it to the sore eye, and the patient became very

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much better. All that passed further in the matter was a caution not to look in at that keyhole any more, and the promise was given. A few days after this master became somewhat surprised to perceive, that a sudden fit of excessive cleanliness had taken possession of his servant, but it seemed to be merely local, confined to that portion of the verandah immediately opposite his bedroom window, which he would persist in diligently sweeping whenever he retired to his bedroom couch to recline for a little. So one day he lay close in on the edge of the wall, so as not to be easily seen from the outside, just to watch the course of events. He had on his shoes, so that, when the boy peeped round the verandah corner and saw no shoes standing in the usual place, he would be sure to come round to the bedroom window to sweep the verandah and see if master was in his room. Nor did he wait long, for very soon a shadow flitted about the walls of the room, plainly showing that some one was lounging in the verandah. Soon the window was darkened: somebody was looking in. The window was constructed with two sides of panes of glass, which bolted above and below in the centre; frequently the top bolt was never fastened, as was the case in the present instance, only the under one. As before stated, master had lain close in to the wall, and was not visible, so the boy flattened his nose against the glass pane, upon which, in his eagerness to see in he leaned his head rather heavily. A wicked thought flitted through master's brain. Quietly, but quickly, his hand next to the wall was raised and grasped the bolt; a sharp click followed; the window, propelled by the weight leaning against it on the outside, burst open, and in toppled the boy, head-foremost upon the top of master on the couch, grasping him as he tumbled in. They both rolled over upon the floor. On a momentary impulse, master had laid hold of the washing-stand which stood at the top of the couch, which of course gave away also, sousing them both with a basinful of dirty water, in which master had washed his feet before lying down. Master sprang up, seated himself on the edge of the couch, and eyed, in a half comical, irritable frame of mind, the mischief he had caused. The boy slowly raised himself up, on his legs, raised his hand to the crown of his head which had received a good crack, as the result of the tumble, then pushed the knuckles of his hands into his eyes, and commenced to howl. But his employer, instead of sympathizing with him in his dire affliction, commenced soundly to rate and scold him upon this very extraordinary conduct. "You rascal, worthless impertinent scoundrel, jumping into my bed-

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room window, right on me when asleep, and pulling me over on the floor; are you mad, drunk, or under the influence of *bhāng*, running amuck?" The boy raises himself up and in a humble manner goes down on his knees, in front of his master, bends forward, resting his forehead upon his feet, and implores his forgiveness. But master says, "Have I not ordered you over and over again to give up this sort of conduct? Am I to have no privacy anywhere, not even in my own bedroom? What are you watching me this way for?" But the boy humbly replies, "I not watch master: think master plenty tired and asleep, and send away some kanganis who came to make too much bother, and just now the washerman come, wanting dirty clothes, and he is in a great hurry, so I just carefully look into the window to see if master was there, asleep or awake, and fall in, making all this trouble, and, *appa-a-a*, too much hurt, please look at my head, *aiyo-o-o*. *Vannan wandaradu*." Master's conscience now began to smite him for the hard thoughts he had entertained against, and the trick he had played upon, his worthy servant, for it was perfectly evident, that, at all events in this instance, what had been attributed to a silly curiosity arose from a correct feeling of great respect, in not disturbing his employer, if he should happen to be asleep, so he patted the boy on the shoulder, said he must get a carpenter to put those window bolts right, to go to the kitchen, and apply some turpentine to his bruised head and—stop, stop, just come here to the sideboard, where, with his own hands, he filled a glass quite full with brandy, presented it to the boy saying, "Drink it up," and that boy required no second bidding! After he had swallowed it he became quite well, went into the kitchen, and there expatiated at great length to the washerman and kitchen coolie, that there was no master like our master, so good and so kind. He told all about his fall, and how he was quite sure every other master would have beaten or kicked him for his impertinent behaviour. "But what do you think our master did, who, no doubt was also both hurt and alarmed?" The kitchen coolie now began to feel rather uneasy, having lent the servant some money, under the promise of repayment next month, and said in a hopeless sort of way, "Stopped a month's pay." The reply to which was a grave shake of the head. The washerman chimed in, "Given you fifteen days' notice. Let me go immediately and see master. I know a very good servant, a brother of one of my wives, who is living in my house just now, in want of a place. Is master in?—for he must be made to take my chief

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wife's brother." "You are both quite wrong," was the reply, "for master stroked my shoulder, took me to the sideboard, giving me a full glass of brandy," and he put his mouth close to those of the coolie and washerman, and breathed hard, so that they said "Brandy!" and looked at each other in a bewildering amazement: looked as if they would very much like to jump through the window also, on the top of master, with the same result. But, after a pause, they all re-echoed in chorus, "No master like our master." But they all suddenly started up, trembled, and looked at each other in speechless terror, when a loud and angry voice was heard proceeding from the back verandah, saying, "What are you all chattering there, about, like a lot of monkeys? You boy, where is that washerman, whose arrival you were so anxious to make known, that you leaped into my bedroom windows right on the top of me? Boy! Dhobi! Are you there?" These two worthies now poked their fists into the washerman's ribs, saying, "Don't you hear? He is angry, calling, and it is *you*; go away quick, or he will be in bad humour all day, and won't *we* catch it? Go away, and mind, it is no use asking him for any advance of money, for he will not give it. When you go in, make a very profound salam, and take particular care not to speak, for, when he is in the quiet afterstage of an attack of temper, he must not be spoken to the least word will bring it all back, but, if you do require to say anything, there is one thing you must not say: never contradict him, for nothing will rouse him up worse than that. If he says, 'Clothes badly washed,' you just say, 'master is right; in great hurry, please excuse, only this once,'—and he will excuse you. But if you say, 'Clothes very well washed, no fault,' you just see what will happen, and if he says"—"Dhobi," is again heard in a very angry tone. "Coming, sar," shouts the boy, as he runs away out of the kitchen, into the coffee, in order to be clear of the coming storm, in utter forgetfulness that the washing-book, is in his possession. The washerman seizes hold of the bundle of clothes; raising it on the ground, he rests it upon his breast, his arms clasp it, reaching about half way round, while his body has a considerable bend backward, in order to afford the requisite rest for the bundle. In this state he staggers into the back verandah and the bedroom, letting the burden drop down on the floor. He then stoops down, and unties the knot, arranges all the clothes upon the bed, in their correct order: handkerchiefs, socks, shirts, trousers, &c., then gives his cloth a shake out, folds it neatly up, placing it under his arm, stepping back behind the door, and

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standing in a respectful position, awaiting the counting of the clothes. Master comes in, looks, and shouts out for the boy to come with the washing-book, and see that everything is correct. "*Swami*," replies the kitchen coolie, coming running into the house, having evidently been interrupted in rubbing himself all over with coconut oil, for his skin is all sleek and shining, and his long hair hanging down his back has just had a good soaking. In this state he presents himself before his now extremely irritated master, who gives vent to some hurried exclamation, upon which the coolie hastily rushes back to the kitchen, from which he again speedily emerges, carrying a smoking red-hot firestick, being under the impression that master wanted to smoke! The firestick is snatched from his hand, and pitched out beyond the verandah, master seizes him by the neck, giving him a good shake, telling him to send in the boy, but the hand is quickly withdrawn as if it had been stung, shaken, and raised to his nostrils, and found to have a strong smell of rancid oil. The hand is raised high in the air, and the coolie seems to have a very shrewd idea for what purpose, for he makes a dart to the kitchen, shouting out, "*Appu aiya!*" But his footslips on the verandah drain, and he comes down with a smash upon his seat. Slowly he raises himself up, places the palms of his hands upon "the twa saft cushions," crying out alternately "*Aiyo swami*," "*Appaya*," "*Vannan vandaradu*." The boy was not very far away, and both saw and heard all these ONGOINGS. He became perfectly aware, that, come of it what would, his presence could no longer be put off, for, the longer he stopped away, or concealed himself, would just made matters worse, and his master more angry. So he makes for the kitchen, and gets hold of a towel, which he dips in cold water, and applies to that part of his head which had been bruised on his tumble through the window. In this state he slowly limps into the bungalow, saying, "Beg pardon, master please excuse, very sore head," and he sat down on the floor of the bedroom, groaning heavily, at the same time producing the washing-book. "Get up," cries master, in a ruthless manner, "the clothes are all arranged on the bed, and you can't count them, sitting there." So the boy placed the palms of his hands flat upon the floor, and raised his body slowly up by the tension on his arms. He then opened the washing-book, in which the clothes had all been entered when given out, and proceeded to the edge of the bed, upon which they were all laid out, ranged in proper order. He counts the socks, *ondu*, *irandu*, *mundu*, *nalu*, &c., consults his book, says, "Right," and makes a note in it to that effect.

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Under "Flannel Shirts," after a great deal of investigation, and searching reference, one is pronounced short, and marked so in the book. Thus, on he goes over the whole list, while master is standing, with his hands in his belt, looking on. When the counting is done, he states, that one flannel shirt and one jungle coat are awanting. Master steps towards the bed, and casts a searching look over the clothes. As he does so, he takes up a pair of trousers, gives them a shake out, saying, "These are not mine." He lets them hang down in front. "Look," says he, these were never made for me. Why, the ends of the legs only reach to a little below the knees, the waist only about half my circumference." Turning fiercely to the washerman, he exclaimed, "What do you mean by this?" who replied, "They must be master's, for he had kept them separate, and no doubt they had shrunk in, during the washing; it was not his fault if master chose to buy and wear such very common stuff." The boy was appealed to, who must know all the clothes very well, but hesitated a great deal about deciding, probably cogitating in his own mind, whose side to take would be most for his own interest. But the washerman gives him two or three sly pokes with his elbow in the ribs, which seemed at once to settle the dispute, for he promptly said, "One small gentleman came here one rainy day, all wet, when master was from home, and asked a change of trousers, which he got, leaving his own and taking away master's: these are they. I recollect now. I do not know who that gentleman was. I neither saw him before that time nor after." Whether master believed this statement or not, he was obliged to accept it, as he never for a moment could entertain the idea of scolding his servant for exercising the usual hospitable customs during his absence. The ultimate result of the counting in of the clothes was, that one flannel shirt, one jungle coat, and one white jacket, were awanting, and, as there was a dispute about the trousers, that would be overlooked. The washerman must bring the clothes, before he got any pay: in fact, the value of the articles was much more than the amount of money due him. On hearing this decision, the washerman looked very sad, sighed deeply, walked out into the verandah, where he sat down on his hind legs, looking mournfully into the drain. After a while, having collected his ideas, or more probably arranged them, he rises up, and approaches the door of the office, where master had sat down to write, and says, "Master can please stop these clothes, how much master think worth, out of my pay, and give me the balance. But the reply was, "One pound is due to you, and it is

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not nearly enough to cover the value of the things : a flannel shirt, a coat, and jacket, all nearly new. Why, the shirt itself is worth more than the money. Go away, and make inquiries, and come back in a day or two, and you just look out, if I see any one else wearing these clothes, I will put you in jail, I will." Tears rolled down the cheeks of the washerman, when he heard this stern resolve, and he said, he never would believe such a good kind master would ever do this, after all the hard work he had undergone, in making his clothes so clean and starching them so nicely ; there was no other gentleman in all the district, for whom he took so much trouble. He would start to-morrow morning, and go round all the estates, until he found the clothes, but he required something for expenses : he must have just "two rupees. Master gets up, opens his cash-box, tossing him the money, which tinkles down on the verandah, saying, "Take that, you pest, and be off, without any more botheration." A cheerful smile gleamed over the washerman's face, as he stooped down, and picked up the money, hastily retiring into the kitchen, where such a noise of talking and laughing immediately ensued, that master had to get up, and bawl out in a very threatening manner, in order to keep order and quietness. Upon hearing this, the washerman shouldered his bundle, and departed ; the kitchen cooly shouldered his axe, and went out to cut firewood ; the boy closed the kitchen door, enveloped himself in the tablecloth, lay down on the floor, and fell fast asleep. All was still, and master made great progress with his writing. About an hour after the departure of the washerman, a shadow darkened the office room, the door of which stood open on an entry from the back verandah, as if some one was standing there, behind, but master did not look up. Then a short cough was occasionlay heard, the only notice taken of which was a more vigorous application of the pen, and deeper dives into the ready-recknor, just upon the very reasonable preusmption that, the coughs ceing merely preliminarA notices of violent outbursts of talk, like the rustling of leaves upon the trees, previous to the full burst of the hurricane, so, it was quite the same in the end, whether or not you took notice or nn coughs, or the rustling of the leaves, for nrtice of the notice would never prevent or modify in any respect the violent outburst of talk proceeding from that throat and mouth in the verandah, which was just as positively certain as that notice or no notice of the rustling leaves could have any effect in checking the full force of the first burst of the south-west monsoon,

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surging up the Kotmale valley. The writer ni that office was very busy, and often consulted his watch. A strapping, clean-limbed, half-grown boy, dressed in a pioneer coat, made of blue cloth, with a red collar, and a really clean white cloth, bound round his waist and loins, legs quite bare, as if in readiness for a sharp run, stood at the office window; round his shoulders, suspended by a strap, hung a square leather bag. This was the tappal (post) bag, and the young man waiting at the window was the "runner." A smart intelligent fellow was he, who, having sometimes before had his pay stopped, for having been too late for the despatch from the district office, seemed to entertain a very vivid recollection of this (in the interests of the estate?) unfortunate occurrence, so he also began to be seized with a tickling in his throat, which produced a good deal of coughing. It might be, probably was, owing to this coughing in front, and coughing behind, that induced master abruptly to bring his letter to a termination, holding it up in his hand as a signal for the post-boy to come round and receive it, who speedily enters, opens the mouth of the leather bag, into which master drops the letter, without even turning round, or rising from his seat, and the post boy is off, as hard as he can run. Being seated at his office table, some other matters of business, with which it was advisable to get on with, were entered into, but the cough in the verandah behind became so very much worse, as to disarrange all master's calculations in decimals. He got up in a very angry frame of mind, with his foot kicked open the door, and saw—the washerman, with a bundle under his arm. "You here again!" was his frantic exclamation, as the ruler was flourished about in his hand, in a very threatening way, but the washerman clasped his hands over his breast, and in a very humble manner said, "Please don't. Master don't be angry. Found all master's clothes." Upon the question being put, as to how this satisfactory event had taken place, his explanation was this. Having returned to his house, in a very low and desponding frame of mind, at having lost these clothes, he sat down in a dark corner, and could do no work; his wife brought him some rice, but he could not swallow a morsel. Says she, "What is the matter? Do you feel an attack of fever or cholera coming on?" "Worse, far worse than that," he replies, "I have lost a pair of trousers and a flannel shirt, and master will not pay me." (Doubtless it was the "will not pay" that was considered worse than an attack of fever or cholera, but the washerman did not deeply study this fact.) Let a woman alone for getting a man out of a scrape, especially if her conscience should smite her, as having

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been the direct means of getting him into one, and that man should be either her husband or lover ; but in this case there was no difficulty at all in the matter, for she just said, "Get up, you stupid ass ; just the old story : a man does make such a fool of himself, when he goes and does things without telling his wife ! Why did you not tell me you intended taking the gentleman's clothes home to him, and I would have given you the articles about which such a foolish row has been raised." Upon saying this, she lifted a cloth from the top of a basket, and, there they were ! She had rented them out to the head kangani of the next estate, for use, during last Sunday, and, after he brought them back, had gone down to the river to give them a wring out, in order to be ready for him to take back, along with the others, but she did not tell him this, fully intending to keep the profit on the transaction private, and for her own private use. "Here they are," says the washerman, taking the towel from under his arm, unrolling it, and placing the missing clothes on a chair. "Now master please pay," and he was paid. One day the washerman presented himself with the clothes, dressed in a beautifully flowered satin vest. Master fixed his eyes upon it, feeling sure he had seen it before. Yes, it must be the very same, an old-fashioned one which had belonged to one of his "forebears," and had been packed into one of his trunks, on leaving home, for the purpose of coming out "very swell" on the "going-to-Kandy day." Just to make sure he opens his almirah, looks well through the upper shelf, where clothes not in ordinary use were stowed away, but no satin vest was there. "Dhobi," says he, "where did you get that waistcoat ? It is mine." "Master's !" says the dhobi. "Impossible : master know very well, how could ever I wear his clothes. I bought it from the servant on the next estate for two rupees." "Two rupees !" exclaimed the owner of the vest, "it is quite new, scarcely ever been used, and must have originally cost fifteen or twenty. But the dhobi still said, "Master know very well, I not that kind of man." "Know, or not know," quoth the master, "off with it, and I will soon prove up it is mine. Sharp with you : no shirking." The washerman, seeing master was quite determined upon having a close inspection, slowly divested himself of the garment, and handed it to him, who said, "What a horrible smell." On this account he stretched out his hands, as they held the raiment, as far from his nose as possible, turned up the back collar, and there, underneath, sewed very neatly in, with red silk, in bright red letters was stitched

P. D. MILLIE.

HAPPINESS AND THE PURSUIT OF IT.

[We find that, owing to an oversight, "Chapter XLV" was not given out to the printer at the proper time, and was consequently passed over.]

CHAPTER XLV.

HAPPINESS AND THE PURSUIT OF IT—THE ATTENDANT IMPS—THE CHARM OF CONTENTMENT, AND SOME OF THE CAUSES OF DISCONTENT—MR. JOHN AND HIS BOTTLE—"THE RANDOM CONFESSIONS OF DISCONTENT:"—THE PINS OF DISCONTENT—"MUCKLE CRY AND LITTLE WOO"—JUNGLE RILLS AND GREAT RIVERS—THE "DOLDRUMS" OF LIFE AND OF COFFEE PLANTING—THE FINAL CAST OF THE ANCHOR—A JUNGLE TRACK—RICE BORROWING AND LENDING THIRTY YEARS AGO—CARTMEN'S VEHICLES—RICE CONTRACTORS AND THEIR TROUBLES—THE FATE OF A CONSIGNMENT OF COFFEE—A DIFFICULTY HAPPILY OVERCOME.

It has been said, that, with a good digestion, and a good balance at his banker's, a man ought to be perfectly happy. Never was there a greater mistake: happiness is a quality of the mind, and, although a good balance and digestion may assist, it cannot alone create and command it.

Happiness seems an unsocial, teasing sort of a fellow, for we either see him far in advance of us, in the future, or, if not, however much we may strain our eyes, and feel unhappy at no happiness being visible in advance. Why, we have only to take it leisurely, in walking along, for it is impossible either to stop on turn back have look behind, it may be in the far-off distance of the past, and we are sure to catch a glimpse of him. He seems however, quite determined not to overtake you, so it is no use either to halt or loiter, even if you could, for he will keep his own distance. Just try and feel happy, because Happiness is not far away, and it is possible that you may cheat him, by waiting at the next round of the road, keeping out of sight, and being down upon him like a grappling-iron, whenever he comes up. But we fear it will be of little use, for Happiness is a fair-spoken slippery fellow; when you seize hold of him, he will make no rude attempts to escape: on the contrary, he will tell you how he has been for this ever so long trying to come up with you, and has managed it at last; do not hold him so very tight, just loosen your grasp, and, as you do so, he puts his arm within yours, saying, "Is n't this jolly? It will take a good deal now, to make us part company." But, shortly after this, you will find that in some strange and sudden manner he is gone away, far in advance. You blame yourself for being negligent and careless, in not sufficiently attend-

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ing to your pleasant companion, and start off in hot pursuit, but Happiness is fully able to keep his own company, when he does not want yours. He is not slow now, for run in pursuit, as fast and as long as ever your breath will carry you, he will either very suddenly disappear round a corner, and be no more seen, or keep at a good long distance before you, without allowing you altogether to lose sight of him, just to lead you on, in vain and fruitless hope, for a regular "will-o-the-wisp" is he. It would be all very well, after Happiness has left you behind, if he also left you, as when he overtook you, alone. But a great number of very troublesome, unpleasant little imps, pests, are always rattling along, in his wake, just to try what they can pick up; on the same principle as sharks follow a ship. For wrecks of, or by, Happiness furnish fine food for Misery, Discontent, Envy, Malice, and the whole tribe of all these fiends, and the worst of it all is, that, after they all fairly attack, and fasten upon you, feel perfectly aware, quite certain, that your time will be so much occupied in endeavouring to keep them at bay, or to prevent your being actually worried altogether, that Happiness will be gone, beyond the most remote possibility, of ever more being come up with. But don't give way, never give in, for these imps are not invincible, and, like the pariah dogs, a bold and determined front will surely eventually send them off with a howl, and their tails between their legs, and well it will be, if you can manage this, before the master in charge of the pack lays his iron grasp upon you. That fell master's name is "Despair": when once you are firmly collared by him, you are just in the position of an elk at bay, a huge rock behind, a whole pack of hounds in front, and Despair, the master of the pack, cheering them on, with the glittering unsheathed hunting knife between his teeth. "Yoicks to him, good old dogs." "Seize him Brandy" "There you have him Misery; hold him fast, good lass!" Toss away with your horns, just as one is shaken off, other two come on, until Despair, in order to save his hounds for another hunt, for the game is plentiful, steps in with the cold glittering hunting-knife. and all is over, for none survive the cut of the knife, as given by that hunter, so keep well clear of him, which is easily done by taking as little notice as possible of his yelping hounds, whose bark is worse than their bite, for they themselves, when you seem to take no notice of them, however much you may feel irritated and annoyed, will, like the pariah dogs, quietly lag behind, and husband up their resources, for the next traveller that comes up. The curious feature, the mystery,

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in this constant pursuit of Happiness, is, that it more frequently than otherwise creates, or catches hold of, Unhappiness, the real facts of the case being, that Happiness, like the coffee tree, requires a suitable climate, in order to develope and perpetuate its luxuriant growth, for, without the genial climate of contentment, it will never come to maturity and bear good crops: the two must go in company. But then again, suppose, that we were all quite content with our present position, and quite happy in it, "what a world it would be!" Why there would be no progress at all, no developement of talent, no rewards for the industrious, because none would apply themselves to industry, being quite content as they are. Just suppose a hard-working assistant refusing a rise of pay, or an offer of a charge on his own responsibility, because he was quite contented with what he had, and where he was, and supposing his proprietor was quite contented with 3 cwts. per acre, and you were to explain to the superintendent, that with a little care, trouble, and extra expenditure on his part, he could very easily manage to get 8 cwts. or more, he would say, "What is the use of bothering? The owner is quite contented and happy, and if larger crops were produced, very much increasing his annual income, he would not be a bit happier, but might possibly become unbappy, for they that have enough may soundly sleep: the oe'rcome only fashes folk to keep." And so, one must remember that contentment is a quality, with a special qualification, for without grumbling, and making ourselves wretched that we have not more, in a thankful spirit make the most of it, make it go as far as possible, at the same time using all right and reasonable means, within the bounds of honesty and uprightness, in justice to ourselves, our friends, and those, if any, who are dependent upon us—and if these means are temporarily unsuccessful, you need not become miserable, and discontented, on that account, for it must be a very low and degraded sphere in life indeed in which you cannot find any happiness at all, and it must entirely proceed from the fact, that you neither look nor search for it. How often have we seen, and continually see, people, whom *we* consider to be in a very unhappy position, one in which if *we* were placed, would altogether drive us frantic, not only comparatively happy, but very much happier than we, who constantly deplore *their* miserable lot! "Man! What a bumper of a crop there would be, had it not been for that fifty acres, so bad with leaf dis—" (no, there was nothing of the sort then)—"with bug," and so, he worries and distresses himself frets into an ill-temper, on account of those

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fifty acres, not at all taking into consideration the woeful plight he would have been in, without the good crop, to make up for the failure of that portion afflicted with bug. In fact, the capital crop on the clean portions of the property increases his unhappiness, when he thinks of that field covered with bug. He never considers that his neighbour whose estate is covered with it, and has no crop at all, thinks *he* is a lucky fellow. On the contrary, he has a secret grudge at his unlucky neighbour, being convinced that your trifling misfortune, as compared with his, is all owing to him, and his estate, for without doubt the bug has spread from his to yours. Now, how are we to reconcile all these conflicting ideas of happiness and contentment?

Let us see what the Scotch say on the subject, for they are so rich in proverbs and quaint sayings, that this never could have escaped them. We have found it. Eureka! Here is the secret fully explained:—"Contented wi' little, but canty wi' mair," "That's the ticket for soup!" exclaimed Mr. John, as he started up, and walked up and down the verandah, rubbing his hands with glee, "and the best of it all is, that it always holds good, because, even after you have got a 'wee mair,' it just succeeds its predecessor, and holds the same place as 'little' did before, so that one just resumes the old position, still contented and still looking in advance for 'a wee mair,' for another very pleasing entry into 'Canty Bay,' which really is the name of a small bay, a little south of the entry into the Firth of Forth. In order to reach Canty Bay, if a boat is taken, the Bass rock stands up, right in your way. Don't pass it by, take in the, or some, 'Bass' (Bass and Alsopp), and so you will all the sooner reach, or become, 'Canty.' Never mind the expense: if you have the cask to spare. What is the use of money to a man, if he not only will not use it, but stints and scrimps himself of all enjoyment, in order to get or save more! No doubt he intends to spend it, and enjoy himself some time. When is that time to come? 'Some time' is just another 'will-o'-the-wisp.' Before it comes, his own time is come, or done, and he finds out, when too late, that he never has been 'contented wi' little,' never 'canty wi' mair'; quite the reverse, for the more he made the more he wanted, and the more reason he had to be contented just made him all the more become most thoroughly discontented because he could not make a great deal more than he did. Well," he thought, "if I could only manage to be contented, it would be, and no mistake, wi' little." As he leaned against the rough jungle stick verandah posts, and gazed out upon a dreary desolate waste of

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blackened stumps, and huge trunks of charred trees, "Nothing but black wherever I turn my eyes; the very clouds lowering down on the edge of the jungle are black, black men and women are looking in at the door, as the boy was covering the table, black servants, with black tablecloths. Black is reflected everywhere on my brain, until my very mind and thoughts are becoming black, and on the principle that 'like cures like' in order to dispel my black and dreary thoughts"—Here he stepped up to a rude box, which answered the purpose of the modern sideboard, opened it, and took out something black, which he held up to the light and surveyed with much greater complacency, than he had done, a short time before, black logs. Indeed, he even smiled, as he passed the mental remark, "No, the boy has not touched it." But again he looked grave, as a doubt seemed to cross his mind, so he set the bottle on the table, and took out of the drawer a small, straight, stiff piece of grass, which he set up in a perpendicular position against the side of the bottle; and the line of liquor inside that bottle was nearly an inch under the top of the piece of grass, whereas in the morning, the stick of grass had been set exactly to correspond with the line of liquor. And the result of this "dodge," this sly investigation, was that there could be no manner of doubt whatever that the boy had drunk a glass, but still he did not like to accuse him, not from any doubt of his guilt, but at the way he had obtained the knowledge of it. Mr. John became very discontented. He was discontented with the boy for taking his liquor, and discontented with himself, that he was ashamed to prove to the boy, who no doubt would deny the charge, how he knew he had taken it. While musing and considering over the subject, he sat down on the couch, took up an old magazine, opened at random, and suddenly became very absorbed, as his eye fixed upon the heading of an article, "The Random Confessions of Discontent," and what he read was this:—

"My mission is, to pick up the pins that every one scatters, and this keeps me very busy, by day and by night, in town or country, in the houses of the rich or poor. I gather my pins, and, having done so, proceed to use them. Whenever I see a rich man, with more money than brains, building an elegant house, and furnishing it in the most costly manner, I begin my work upon him. I put pins in his luxurious sofas, pins in his softest easy-chairs, pins in his bed of down; I even put pins in his favourite dishes, until they cease to gratify his palate—yes, and pins in the elegant dresses of his wife and daughters too, until the whole family become uneasy and discontented. Then, find-

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ing no pleasure in their possessions, they sell or rent their fine house on which they had prided themselves so much, and try change and travel. In nine cases out of ten, they go abroad, and make the tour of Europe, but they do not escape me, no indeed! I follow them in all their journeys, keeping them continually on the move, putting a few pins in every new purchase, or new place, just to keep them from too much tranquillity. Finally, the rich man turns his face homeward again, under a vain impression that, among the old familiar scenes, the old rest and comfort will be found. Delusion. I put pins in his old pleasures, his old pursuits, until he can glean nothing restful from them, and is fain to become a dissatisfied grumbler for the rest of his life. But my grand stroke of business is, to put a few sharp pins into a married man, and send him home smarting under their effect: of course *he* thinks that his business perplexities have irritated him, and lays his ill-humor on some rise or fall of merchandise [or those awful coolies]; but I know better. Naturally, he vents some part, no doubt the greatest; if not the whole, of his vexation upon his wife, and this saves me a very great deal of work, since no thrust of mine, however sharp, could equal the pain her husband's ill-temper gives her. In fact that is the easiest way to reach a married woman, for all the pins I can put into the domestic machinery, all the sharp-pointed frictions of social life, are as nothing compared with the smart a husband's looks and words can inflict. Very often, too, I make one at a dinner or evening party, and slyly put a few spare pins in, here and there. Have you never been thoroughly uncomfortable at a social gathering where you expected to find only enjoyment? Ah! that was owing to some of my pins. But don't suppose I am utterly given up and over to malicious mischief. My vocation gives me many opportunities of doing good, which I embrace very gladly. When I catch people saying unkind things, repeating foolish gossip, showing selfish disregard for the happiness of others, I never fail to prick them severely. Want of honor, honesty, extravagance, wasted opportunities, all these, and numerous other causes, provoke me, the sharpest pricks and thrusts, given with unceasing vigilance. But it often seems to me the more I disturb and torment them, the more they engross themselves in schemes of fraud and corruption. Why, I have sometimes been quite in want of pins, because of the myriads I have wasted on these people. Then, I practise economy, and make use of substitutes, and the very best in use are the 'bores.' Why, with one really efficient first-class 'bore,' I can make a dozen people

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uncomfortable, not to say wretched, for the pins of discontent smart with increased severity, when 'the bore' commences his work, &c." Here Mr. John started up, threw down the paper, put his hand behind him, on a soft portion of his body and screamed out, "Oh dear! it is full of pins!" Just so. the pins of discontent are sticking about your clothes every where, but you do not perceive, or even feel them, so long as you are actively employed, but, get indolent and lazy, sit down and do nothing, then you feel their pricks. Well does discontent know this, for the man who has nothing to do, and it may be, also the woman, just becomes her pin-cushions, actually stuck so full of pins, that they can hold no more, and nothing can ever be seen about them, but the heads of all sizes of the pins, sticking out; indeed so full does the cushion at time become, that it would puzzle even discontent herself to stick in any more! Mr. John now bent under the influence of a more contented frame of mind, and everything around did not seem so black, for he considered, however dull his position might be, and no doubt was, both present and in prospect, that he knew several very decent fellows, perhaps much more so than he was, who were "on the staff," and who envied *him*, who would even jump at the catch, or chance of succeeding him in his situation should it become vacant. Here he gave a shudder, and as he shuddered Discontent became uncomfortable and left him, and as nature "abhors a vacuum," her place was immediately supplied by "Common Sense," who is now becoming so rare, as to be better known under the name of "uncommon sense"—so very uncommon, that when she does favour a man with her presence it is very frequently only for a very brief and limited period. So "Common Sense" merely whispered, "Yes, and at a smaller salary than you receive, small as it is," and was silent. So Mr. John gradually resumed his usual cheerfulness, with the remark. We always look to those who are better off than ourselves, bewail our hard fate, and accuse fortune of being fickle and unkind, but just be consistent and not so very absurd; look at the other side also, and count which are the most numerous, taking all necessary circumstances into consideration, those who are better off, or those who are worse. Of course you will say, "Ah, but the latter class have not our abilities; they are not nearly so clever as we are." If this is really your opinion, you are worthy of all sympathy, as all are, who—over-rate their own talents! For I tell you, talent and ability, be it in the proprietor, manager, assistant, or even in the meanest coolie on the estate, is just

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as sure to find its level, as that water rushing down your steep hill side is. It is making a great noise and its rapid motion is not only perceptible but audible to all. But perhaps this is only on the principle of one of our old sayings, "Muckle cry, and little woo, as the deil said, when he clippet the soo." While the deep still river below is standing it may be in apparently stagnant pools motionless, it is moving for all that, although slow, just as certainly towards its level as the dashing small stream. Dash, and rattle on, small rill, make a great rattle and noise, proclaiming to all what wonders you are about to perform, but know your certain fate, which is to accomplish neither end nor object yourself. All you have done is even altogether overlooked or taken no note of, for you tumble into that big river, are absorbed by it, and lose all your noise and bubble, having eventually disappeared only to swell the supply of that *deep* river, if you have made it rise a little higher. You get no credit, for there are many others besides yourself, who are just acting the same part, very likely not even seen, for they run through the dark silent glades of the jungle and only if you take the trouble to examine, not otherwise, will you see their mouths bubbling out their contents into the big river! But these are only mountain rills, which never become rivers themselves and only act as subordinate branches, or feeders. Pause and consider well, are you a "jungle rill," before you become the victim of discontent. But as all rivers proceed from a very small source, do not be discouraged, because yours runs a long way through a dark and dense jungle, unseen, perhaps unknown to any; for depend upon it, just as every river has its source, so also has it its course and termination and a number of people are so very silly, as always to be making inquiry about the source of a rill of good water. They say, we cannot have any thing to do with that stream, we don't know where it comes from, it comes out of a dark unknown jungle, and perhaps is pernicious, tasting strongly of mineral, decayed vegetable matter, or what not. Perhaps so. Why not make certain and try, and perhaps, you will say, who would have thought this small rill would have supplied such cool and refreshing drink? Few streams are so very insignificant as to become lost in a swamp; these meet with a very suitable termination being deserving of no other end than being swamped. We once resided in a hut on the banks of a large river. How very delightful it was, the noise of the water at night lulled us to sleep, and during the heat of the day, the coolness was most refreshing. At morning or evening we had merely to throw off our clothes

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in the room, and pop into a big pool in the river. True the rushing noise of the water was rather inconvenient if a neighbour came in, and conversation engaged in, or when we were giving necessary instructions to the work-people, but the situation had many advantages also. Every one has, if you will examine. When people came to grumble about short pay, or requests for more advances, or any other unpleasant subject, we never looked up and if they commenced to shout very loud, our eyes would be raised in a sort of stupid wonder; we would shake our head, point to the water and our ear, and resume reading or writing. It was no use people standing there, we could hear nothing, so they went away and stood in groups on the road above, watching for master coming out, in order to renew the attack when away from the immediate presence of that water, but master saw them, and did not come out! At last, we began to suspect from this habit, and from the constant noise of the rushing water, that deafness was coming on, until one day this opinion was proved to be wrong, for, on a man coming in, who owed us money, and stating, in a low and sorrowful accent, that he had come to pay it, he was heard at once, without the least difficulty, and told to "fork out." Then what a comfort it was to the boy, having such an abundance of water close at hand; indeed he offered, for a small increase of pay, to do without a kitchen coolie, which was granted. But, in course of time some residents higher up commenced to pulp and wash coffee, and so, as a consequence of course, in course of time, the big river became all filthy and polluted, the water could not be used, was unwholesome even to bathe in, and the smell was very bad. The result was that we had to fall back upon an insignificant small jungle rill at some distance off, not only for necessary supplies of water, but even for bathing. What could we have done without this small rill, which was previously never thought of, perhaps not even seen. That small rill was not only a comfort, but an actual necessity to all, except the "boy," who now stoutly insisted upon having a coolie, but we said no, a bargain was a bargain; but there took two to consider a bargain, as we found out that even coffee was not drinkable when made of coffee pulp water; and so of course had to give in. Who would ever have thought that this small rill would ever have become of so much importance, for, without it, we must have moved off without having any other house to move to. Despise not small rills, nor "small matters," for you know not how soon you may require and be dependent upon their services, even if they should be

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temporarily lost in a swamp, they can always be diverted into some useful channel, by a judicious system of drainage, requiring some skill and patience. Patience is a good stout vessel to sail, but you must mind your rudder ! Recollect, all voyages are not made alike, all differ in some degree, and the causes cannot well be understood. Some vessels just pass out of one trade-wind into another, without any stop at all ; others again will be for days and weeks becalmed in the "doldrums"; while another slow ship has had better luck, and sailed through, with little experience of the "doldrums." We all have our seasons of the "doldrums"—proprietor, manager, assistant, even the cooly, who would always be in the "doldrums" if he could. From personal experience we always did, and still do, stand more in dread of the "doldrums," than a gale of wind : action before inaction is any day better, far better, to wear than to rust out. But still, under certain circumstances, "doldrums" are pleasant, provided they do not last too long : indeed, often desirable or even necessary, as, after a heavy gale, there is now good time and opportunity to put the ship all to rights, sew up the rents in the sails, and splice the broken ropes. And thus also it is with the "doldrums" of life : our planters must all have experienced what a relief they are, in a heavy picking, a break before another *push* ripens up ; you get your cisterns cleared out, the wet coffee dried up, and even a quantity despatched, making room in the store for more. Then, after a long period of two-bushel picking, when you hardly had time to eat your breakfast, because, just when you were half done, a store cooly would come running up and tell you, "The coolies are come, waiting, actually waiting for master." After bolting a few spoonfuls of rice and curry you also bolt without the after-breakfast rest and pipe. How pleased the "doldrums" are when you are done to a three-quarter or half-bushel picking, taken in once a day at four o'clock, provided, and provided only, you have secured your estimate ! Then, who ever forgets the "doldrums," between crops, when you get away for a few weeks to visit your friends, and come back fresh and invigorated to brave another gale of wind, which may in all probability set in immediately after your return, having been gathering up in great force, all the time of your absence, for, as you step into your verandah, you step out of the "doldrums." There they are, ready to pounce upon you, standing behind those bushes at the corner of the kitchen, a dozen of coolies at the very least, and, oh horror ! two red

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cloths among them: *one* would have been bad enough, but *two*! A gale of wind is no name for it; out of the doldrums, into a squall. And, yes, there is the squall of a child, but it might have been worse, it might have been a *white squall*—which it most certainly is not. It is doubtful if you will be able to put them off with “*Nalaku va*” (come to-morrow), for, have they not been waiting for weeks to settle this very important question during master’s absence, and now, when he has come, he sends them away, without inquiring into the case at all. “Well,” you say testily, “what is the case?” It was that “one red cloth had called the other no better than she should be.” “Well,” replies master, “that is easily settled: just tell the other to call the other the same, and they will both have got justice in having the plain truth told them, and you know it is true.” So the people depart, probably wondering how they could have been so foolish, as not to settle this simple quarrel themselves, but “master was wise,” and he *was* wise, for he knew, that to settle a quarrel in favour of one woman, however justly, was merely to create another, infinitely more bitter and difficult of settlement, in fact, admitting of no settlement at all, with the other.

But there is another description of the “doldrums” which must occur to all who escape shipwreck on the voyage, and that is, as you enter, or have entered, the harbour, slowly, imperceptibly, you move on, so quietly, that, were it not for the gentle ripple behind, you would not be aware of any motion at all: indeed, you are not sailing, but drifting in with the tide. The tide, is not visibly strong, and is chiefly a strong under-current, so strong, that if you try to tack, “lie to,” or bring her head round *the inset* to the shore will then be proved, as the water foams against the broadside, creating a drift, that sends you on much faster, than if you had just “eased her off.” A few rolls and pitches, and you recede in the course, but only to meet another swell, that sends you further in than before! The studding and top-gallant sails have long previously been taken in, even the very booms stowed away under the bulwarks, the top-sail, half-tied up, rattles against the mast, the main-sail scarcely draws. Heave the lead! 10—9½—8! You hear the patter of the boats against the sides of the ship that are to take you ashore, but do not see them. Even the shore is not visible, for it is concealed in a dense fog, which is sometimes, but not often, fringed with a bright golden lining into which you see, but your eyes are dazzled, for they are dull and dim with the brine of the long

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voyage. None who have landed on that shore ever returned, so that you cannot actually realize what is before you, what awaits you. Are you ready? No—for, after the long voyage, much as we used to complain and grumble at the bad fare on board—for where, and when, was there ever a passenger who was not dissatisfied with some portion of his “bill of fare,” and thought he was poorly treated for his money?—we are really sorry to leave the ship. Many of our fellow-passengers whom we considered very bad company, in fact have not spoken to for days, now seem not such unpleasant fellows after all, and all the old stiffness drops off, as we become very friendly. Why, oh why, were we so foolish as not to make this discovery before. What a pleasant voyage we might have had! “Are your trunks packed?” “No, we will do it to-morrow!” To-morrow!! “Let go the anchor,” sounds through every corner and crevice of the ship, and the rattle of that chain is the rattle in your own throat. Into the boat you are pushed without that luggage which you were to have packed to-morrow. It has just saved you the trouble, for these boats take in no luggage; they push off and enter either the dark gloomy mist or the bright clouds with the golden lining that conceal the shore, are no more heard of, and forgotten, for “None return from that quiet shore who cross with the boatman pale and cold.”

It would be difficult to tell what Mr. John's feelings were now, for he was sitting with his elbows on his knees and his face buried in his hands. He was probably thinking it's all the same in the end, all the same fifty years hence, or may be fifty or five days. But he started up and said, “Away with such foolish thoughts, as we don't know when the voyage will terminate. Due provision must be made in case it may prove a long one, or, as it draws towards its end, the pilot may be long in boarding. Just suppose we were tacking up ‘the Channel,’ home in view, our voyage over, and waiting for a pilot, and all our ship's stores done; but the pilot does not sail up indeed, none of their flags are as yet visible: about, and the passengers are starving, with home and plenty in view, what if a strong easterly wind should set in, and again blow them out to sea? How are we ever to weather the last storm, if our stores are exhausted? But, before thinking of exhausted stores, I must first think how they are to be purchased; there seems no chance of that at present. But the present only is ours, and a capital stamp it is, with which to coin the future. For there is no present state of being, however mean, low, and miser-

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able it may be, however utterly useless it may seem, that does not represent a *die* to stamp to future coin, however trifling. Are we unable to save or gain money? We may be gaining experience, which is a very useful *die* for some future coinage. Have we a good stock of experience, and no bullion is offered us to coin, then stamp it with patience, and none need be reminded of the great things experience and patience have attained. It is hard to wait, especially to those who are naturally of an energetic and active frame of mind." But Mr John now raised his head, got up, and seemed quite cheerful, as he said, "I will have patience and wait quietly, just as the cat does at the hole of a mouse!" and our friend again rubbed his hands, and said, "That's the ticket for soup." And moreover, without being altogether of the propensities of the cat, we may take a lesson from her patient perseverance. After waiting and watching a hole for some time expecting a mouse to come out, and none comes, she thinks, perhaps there is no mouse in the hole! so keeps a sharp look-out under the possibility that if none is in, or coming out, one may be going into it, and, whether coming out or going in, it is equally the same to her, provided she catches it. But after watching for a long time and none is to be seen, if the hole is forsaken altogether, and is a rejected "digging" or "scraping," with nothing more to "scrape up," why, if the proverb holds good, that "The mouse who only trusts to one poor hole can never be a mouse of any soul," it must also prove equally true of the cat! If the cat is wise, she will look out for another hole, when without doubt her patience will be rewarded. But it sometimes happens that even cats are too hasty. Just as she has turned away from the old hole, out pops the mouse, and, while vainly making a dart to clutch it, in pops another into another hole, and she loses them both! And so the best plan is to stick to the old hole which you have watched so long, for it is very probable that, just as you get discontented and turn you away, turn away from the moment of your success or the turning-point in it. "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." Never let loose a small bird, because you think you may require both hands to catch that large mocking-bird in the bush, lest you may find both hands empty, and find yourself in consequence looking extremely foolish, and feeling it too.

"The bungalow" (save the mark!) stood, surrounded by a mass of burnt logs, through which no road had been cut, and the only way any one could be guided in approaching it was by the marks of mud on the sides of the felled timber, which shewed that this was the way,

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that people, black or white, following up the footsteps of some original explorer, had just like the sheep kept to the first track. They clambered over the sides of the huge trees, and of course left the marks of mud from their shoes or bare feet on its sides. There could be no mistaking these marks in daylight, but woe to the unfortunate and benighted stranger who would attempt to leave the house after dark. Even in daylight they sometimes go wrong, and find themselves lost in a waste wilderness of timber, with the bungalow in view. In daylight, the main point to guard against was to exercise caution as to where the mud track branched off to the lines, because if you followed up this you would soon find or smell that you were amongst something much more unpleasant than mud!—Mr. John's mind was so full of his ruminations on mice and cats, that when he looked up, and of course looked along the line of way that led to the house, he exclaimed, "What is that coming up? A cat? A monkey? No, monkeys don't wear old felt hats, jungle coats, or carry long poles in their paws." The object that attracted his attention seemed very active, his head suddenly appeared on the top of a large fallen tree, upon which sitting down on his "hind-legs," he would pause, looking out for a convenient spot for another spring, then a sudden dart and nothing was visible. After a little, a head and shoulder would peep over another large log, and the whole body, pulled after it with a sudden jerk, would again make some frantic exertion and be lost to sight. A deep ravine is close at hand, and the bold adventurer pauses, for at its bottom rest immense masses of half-burnt branches, which would puzzle even a cat to cross over. A glance of the eye, again the mud track points the way over a tree, which acts as a bridge, a narrow one it is, he stoops down and fastens tight his shoe-ties, draws his stockings over his trousers, boldly steps upon the tree. On slowly he moves, carefully putting one foot very slightly before the other, with the heel well turned out so that the hollow of the foot catches in the round of the timber; both his elbows are well raised up and out, working up and down with every motion of the body, so that, if one did not see where his feet were acting, his motion would be somewhat similar to a slow flight through the air. He is half over, and becomes shaky in the pins, sways to one side, when suddenly one of the wings is stretched out to its full length, the hip protrudes under it, the equilibrium is restored! Another ravine is come up to, over which there are no trees; into it he disappears until the head pops up on the opposite bank, and Mr John says, "Why, it is just neighbour Toms; what

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can be bringing him here, for he is fond of living alone, likes his own company best and never visits unless he wants something and I have a pretty good notion what he wants now." As Mr Toms entered the verandah, his host said, "Glad to see you old boy; a sight of you is gude for sair e'en." But Toms was not in a pleasant frame of mind, and said, "If it has done good to your eyes it is more than I can say for my legs." Here he stooped down, drew up his trousers, exposing limbs just as black as the timber they had crossed, not with charcoal but with bruises, or rather both combined. "Why don't you cut a road to a bungalow, or at all events clear away some of that timber?" For in these times roads were just the very last work people thought of commencing, and when they commenced them never finished. What was the use of roads? Let us get on with the holing and planting, after that is done, time enough to cut roads. But after the planting was done there was also something else to do, and, having got used to the circuitous footways winding round and over logs, they often remained in this state, as roads, for years. What an immense deal of time and labour must have been lost and wasted for want of roads, and we quite recollect the wonder and contempt with which some bold planter was treated, when it was perceived that the first work he began on his clearing was to cut roads! "What sort of a fellow is this? He will lose the season, he will be too late with his planting, time enough to cut roads after the land is planted; and there is nothing else to do." They never thought of the work and time the prompt cutting of roads saved, also what it saved in plants after the land was planted, for all below the roads so cut the young plants were covered up with earth cutting from the roads and had just to be planted over again, which very frequently was never done, so that all underneath the roads, which if carefully planted up would of course have been the best coffee on the estate, only presented a bare space of ground, upon which the crop of weeds was unusually luxuriant. Mr. John replied, "No time to cut roads, and, even if time and coolies were available, what's the use of cutting roads before the land is planted. It would just be a waste of work in more ways than one, for the coolies would never go up and down the short cuts to their work, or in carrying plants, but always round by the roads, and thus an immense deal of time and money would be lost not only in cutting roads but in using them I thought you had more sense, Toms." Mr. Toms said nothing, being probably of the opinion, that this explanation was so correct

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as not to admit of any dispute, besides it would hardly be judicious for him to commence a dispute just at present, for he said, "John, I have come over to borrow some more rice from you, and the very least I can do with is twenty bushels." In these times, when we were all dependent on the will, pleasure, or convenience, of the cartmen, there were some people who were always borrowing rice; they never had any of their own, because, whenever their rice carts arrived, they had just to pay it all away to some neighbour from whom they had borrowed, and a few days after doing so, be at him again to lend them more! Indeed, if the obliging neighbour from whom they had borrowed lived a little way down the road, very probably their rice carts would never reach their destination, but be ordered to stop, stand and deliver, before coming to the end of their journey: an order, which of course the cartmen were only too glad to receive, as it saved them some miles of additional journey, at the same hire, so their answer, in receiving this order, was something more than the usual grunt of "*Hondayi*." It was, "*Bohoma hondayi*; *hondayi mahatmaya*," which may convey a double meaning, any way you liked to take it, or more properly expressing both, "*Very good*," or "*Good master*." What a good master to save us four miles of journey, and that nasty pull up to the rice store, and at the same time, without any dispute or reluctance, pay us our full hire." "*Bohoma hondayi*!" There were likewise people who never were out of rice: not only this, but who were always able and willing to assist their neighbours. Such were often put to a great deal of bother and trouble, not only in entering the rice store, generally at unseasonable hours, in order to issue rice to the famished coolies from their neighbour's estate, but, very likely, also at unseasonable hours, to be at the trouble of measuring it, when it was sent back! The obliging planter who had lent his neighbour rice, after the day's work was done, and he was comfortably settled down for the rest of the evening, perhaps even at dinner, would be startled by the appearance of a string of coolies in front of the house, under heavy loads, contained in gunny or mat bags on their heads. It might be a pour of rain, still, he had to get up, go down to the store, and again measure in his own rice, all wet and caked, whereas, when he lent it, it was sound and dry. Nor is this all, for here is a pretty go: why, it is all one or two measures short! "What is the meaning of this, you rascals?" The rascals assume a look of injured innocence and great astonishment, spread out the

palms of their hands, open wide their mouths, and gaze into each other's eyes; then the whole of the eyes settle upon master, as this sage speech is delivered. "These cartmen are great thieves, master know that." But whoever the thieves may be is clearly of no consequence to the lender. He is not going to be such a fool as to be at the trouble of lending rice, and then receive it back again two or three measures per bushel short. It is bad enough to receive back a very much inferior sample of rice, compared with what he lent, without submitting to this additional injury. So the deficient quantity is reported, and claimed. The borrower is now down upon his coolies, and stops the quantity out of his next issue to the coolies, who of course loudly protest, and grumble, "If there should be a few rogues amongst them, why should all be punished?" which even master is constrained to acknowledge as a just remark. So, the next time a borrowing crusade is engaged in, a man who can write, probably even the superintendent himself writes down all the names of the coolies, and, as they measure or re-measure, checks them off, as correct, or short in delivery. What a trouble, botheration and turmoil, and how true, in the case of borrowing rice, was the old saying, "Those that go aborrowing go asorrowing." Again, the rice borrower would sometimes be in such urgent haste, that he would send off to his obliging neighbour without any bags in which to carry the rice. The lender who of course was a man of method and system, or he would not be able to lend rice, and had all his empty bags slung on a rope attached to the beams of the store, would say, "Well, I will give you bags if you will promise to bring them back again to-morrow," at which simple request the coolies being always ready to agree to anything, however disagreeable, that was to be put off till to-morrow, said with glee, not "*Nalaku va*," but "*Nalaku konduva*." But the next day happened to be wet, and the coolies, on proceeding to work, put all the bags over their heads and shoulders, to keep off the rain. Finding that this made a very comfortable shelter, why, they just kept the bags, and did not take them back at all. After some time, and no bags were returned, "oh! but our gude man an angry man was he," he wrote rather a sharp note to his neighbour on the subject, who of course was very much shocked, sent down to the lines, and gave orders under pains and penalties, the result of which was, that the obliging lender found himself in possession of a rare stock of old rags, for every coolie considered he had faithfully performed his orders

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and his duty by keeping the good bag, which he had borrowed with the rice, and returning in its place the most wretched, useless, remnant of a rag, he could lay hands on, and, while master would be under the pleasing impression that he had done his duty, he would perhaps be quite unable to account for the unusual dryness of his friendly neighbour, and wonder why he was not so free and hearty in lending rice as formerly. But he found it out the next time he had occasion to borrow, for, being reduced to great extremities, he ventured to send over a note in the usual style, "Hard up for rice, carts not come, due in three days, can you lend me twenty bushels?" The answer returned would be, "Yes, when you like, provided, and provided only, you send BAGS to carry it in." The word bags being scored well under at once let him into the secret. But of course "it was all the fault of the kangani : he ought to have seen to this." Oh yes, of course, we can't expect a manager, who cannot manage his own rice supply, to occupy his attention with such a trifling subject as bags. Bags used practically to be considered quite unworthy of any care or management. Why, whenever there were none, what more simple than to write for or buy more. When the order was given to measure up coffee, and the storeman told you, with a grave countenance, "No bags," without any question or investigation on the subject, more would be purchased, and what eventually became of them all has ever seemed a hidden mystery. None ever thought of keeping a "bag account," just a simple receipt and issue, as easily kept as a petty cash-book. But, petty cash-book ! Why, we have actually known some, who did not even keep that!—on the plea that "What was the use?" We cannot remember everything that is spent, and if it is not all spent upon, it is all spent on, the estate ! and just in the same degree was their reasoning about bags. If they were not on the estate, they ought to be : no doubt, but in what form ? Let us make a raid into the lines and see, and we see laid down in many a fold over the coolies' plank beds what once had been bags, nice comfortable mattresses and blankets made of gunny cloth. The seams of the bags had all been picked out, so that they were converted into square pieces ; these were stitched together, with masters' twine, into the required lengths and breadths so as to furnish the required amount of bed and bedding, for one, two, or half-a-dozen, as the case might be. The declaration that there were no bags here was quite correct, nevertheless we ruthlessly despoil all these snug beds of all the bedding, pitch them out remorselessly into the verandah, have them all conveyed to the store,

and again have them sewn up into their original and correct form, and find that there are plenty of bags. But after the coolies' beds were converted into bags, filled and loaded, and we were at a loss for more, and told the cartmen, who were still waiting to load, that we had plenty of bags, but could not find them, they would be anything but satisfied with this solution of the difficulty. We have known a few estates in the olden times, on which "No bags got" was the general rule, a condition of matters which soon spread amongst the fraternity of cartmen, so that they would even positively refuse engagements to proceed to such, and the Colombo agencies would experience any amount of trouble in procuring cartage for some of these estates, unless return empty or new bags were part of the up-loads, for then they were all right, not only themselves, but for others also. For, empty or "seeking" carts along the roads always had an out-look for those with empty bags. "What estate are you going to?" So they followed in the wake of the carts with the empty bags like sharks in the wake of a ship, and very soon got them transferred to their own carts, full, at a full rate of hire: three-quarters advance to pay tolls and food for cattle. Nothing less could possibly do: what small profits they must have had, frequently none at all, for they had no balance hire to receive on delivery, all owing to the bad measurement on the estate (?) or to the bad bags, which had burst, and allowed all the coffee to drop out and down on the road. There might to a certain extent have been some truth in this, and we have often been surprised why the cartmen did not have proper bottoms made to their carts, which would have easily retained all the coffee burst out from the bags, for the bottoms were just merely loose planks, between which the coffee dropped or rather ran out upon the road, so that often on following up behind a batch of carts from the long white mark on the road, there could be no doubt at all as to the contents of that cart as clearly apparent from the line of leakage come out of it. We have often urged upon the cartmen the great advantage and gain to themselves, which would result by their having the planks on the bottoms of the carts closely fitted, dovetailed, and nailed down, but they did not seem to see it at all, and only replied by a stupid stare, a shrug of the shoulders, with a blurt out, "It is not the custom." Now, the expense of having this done would have been so very trifling as compared with the advantage, gain and freedom from after trouble and loss to the drivers and owners, that we never could and still cannot understand the reason that they did not do it; very likely there was some reason for it, and it may be, if they still drive their carts in this condition. What could or can it be?

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All old planters will well recollect cart contractors, who were the responsible parties, upon whom the agency firms were down for defaulting cartmen. It used to be the constant cry that these men got rich and fat at the cost of proprietors, and even of cartmen themselves. But what could we have done without them? If they did get rich, they also had their own troubles, and many a loss to put down, and up with, per contra, and many a man has earned his money with less trouble and worry than they did. We well remember two of the leading contractors' names that used to be signed at the bottom of the cart-notes, holding themselves responsible for the safe and correct delivery of the goods. These names were "Kandappa" and "Mathes." When we saw their names signed at the bottom of the waybill, opposite the printed word "Contractor," we knew that however much we might be annoyed and put to inconvenience by late deliveries or no delivery at all, there was no risk of ultimate final loss, for the cart contractor would "stump up." These contractors must have experienced something of the life of the *puddock* under the harrow who, when he was tumbled and tossed about, was fain to exclaim, "Too many masters," when every tooth gave him a "tang" or rug. The superintendent wrote to the agent? "Carts long past due, not to be heard of anywhere, coolies all starving, and at great loss, buying at famine prices in the bazar." The agent would despatch a messenger from his office to bring up the contractor for a conference. This important person might be enjoying his noonday sleep or be disturbed in his endeavours at making a wonderful large dish of rice become most wonderfully small, at all events to *outward* appearance, when he had to start up, and promptly obey the summons to appear at the office. He would there state that messengers had been sent up-country to endeavour to trace the cartmen, instead of doing which all trace of them, who had gone to trace, was also lost. He would be then told to "pay up," or procure other carts and rice at his own expense to make up for the loss, but he would ask for and crave for a little time, in order to make an investigation himself. If allowed, he would start off on the Kandy road, driving in a small bullock hackery, very slowly, for every batch of carts on the road he would stop and question, if they had seen or heard anything of the objects of his search; he would pull up at every cattle-shed, and peer in to see if there were any bags of rice piled up inside for the same purpose; none of the verandahs of the bazars escaped his searching glance. At last, at the bottom of the pass, he sees heaped up inside a shed an immense number of bags of rice. On stepping in, taking out a note-book, and comparing the marks on the

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bags with some of his memoranda, he has found the rice! All satisfactory so far, but what is the use of finding the rice, if he does not also find the carts? He walks round the huge pile of bags, and sees, sound asleep in a snug quiet corner, "the man in charge." He catches hold of the fellow, lugs him out, and commences a searching inquiry. "Where are the cartmen? Where are the carts?" "The man in charge" quite loses his presence of mind, and becomes so confused at the unexpected appearance of this high official, that—that—he actually tells him the truth! "Cartmen stored up the rice here, and gone back to Colombo to engage other loads," and of course to obtain in ready cash another heavy advance on the hire. Our contractor is equal to the difficulty, looks about, and engages some other empty carts, to load and take on the rice, returns to Colombo, and informs his employers that he had found the carts, cattle all sick and unable to move but that he had forwarded the rice by other carts, free of all extra charges. But, just as frequently as otherwise, perhaps more so, the contractor would find the carts, but not the rice. He would meet a string of empty carts coming rattling down the Kadugannawa Pass, and recognize the features of the drivers, crying out, as they attempt to pass in hope of not being known, "Baba Appu! *Hitapan*. Where are you going to? Going the wrong way? And where is the rice?" Baba Appu, seeing he was fairly in for it, would pull up, put on a bold face, and say, what could be expected, he had received so little money in advance, that it was not sufficient to pay for cattle-food and tolls, so that he was obliged to leave the loads in a cattle shed at Peradeniya, return to Colombo for a fresh load to Kandy, so that the advance he hoped to receive on the latter would enable him to take on the former to its destination. But the contractor would order him to turn back with him, and he would manage it all. On reaching Peradeniya, and the shed where the rice was reported to have been stored, not a single bag was to be seen! "Now, you rascal," says the contractor, "where is the rice?" But Baba Appu falls down on his knees, weeps bitterly, and says, he is a ruined man: some passing empty carts must have loaded the rice, run off with it, stolen it. But the contractor has no compassion, collars the poor fellow; stripping off his cloth, he finds concealed, in proximity to a concealed portion of the body, a large sum of money, being the amount he had received for the rice, which had been sold in Kandy. When contractors went off on these expeditions they always took some trustworthy followers with them, to be ready in time of need, so the

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money taken from the cartmen was handed over to one of these, who, with the carts and carters, returned to Kandy, purchased more rice, and conveyed it in safety to the estate, a month after it was due, while the contractor would retrace his steps, report having found the carts, despatched them on with a trustworthy person, and were doubtless arrived by this time. How could it be these contractors made so much money? Perhaps, some share of the cart-hire also went to them, for we well remember, when cartmen were troublesome about advances for the down hire, of pointing out to them, that they really could not have spent all that heavy advance received in Colombo, when they would reply they knew nothing about it, they had merely received a very small sum for tolls. Now, if the cartmen did not get it, why, and for what purpose, was it given to the contractor? What occasion had *he* personally for all this heavy advance? We suspect the only answer will be the natural love of the native for advances, whether they require it or not, the almost impossibility of getting anything done, unless it is first paid for, which leaves the recipient of the money in, to him, the pleasing position of being able to do the work, how, when, and where, he likes; or the more pleasing contingency still of not doing it at all: in which case advanced money becomes to the advancer just similar to water spilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again. Not that the defaulter is so barefaced as to say, he will not refund. He is quite polite, acknowledges he owes the money, and will pay: but never does. The very idea of owing money to any one is so pleasing to his peculiar structure of mind, that he would consider himself very unhappy, an ill-used individual if he ever found himself in the, to him, unfortunate position, as described, of owing no man anything. If he ever found himself, against his will, in this state, he would make use of it as the very best excuse for obtaining an advance, "Master must advance him a certain sum, for he owed no man anything." It would be in vain to advise him to remain in this position, for he felt very unhappy, it was a condition altogether unworthy of his high character. What, was a man of his good character not to be trusted! He was not to be treated as one of the meanest of the vile, whom nobody would trust: he must borrow and that immediately, in order to sustain his reputation "Kandappa," and "Mathes": these names will recall to those of our old friends who are left not the lights but the dark shadows of others days. What could we have done without them, what, but to submit to stolen rice, coffee 5 to 10 per cent short on delivery, or some times no delivery at

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all, or not in accordance with "sealed sample"? We once despatched to an agency house a consignment of coffee. On its arrival in Colombo, a letter was received, asking us what we meant, by sending them 600 bushels of parchment chaff, with only a few black shrivelled kernels inside : no remark made on the subject, not even a sample ; the coffee was not worth the cart-hire, it was not worth putting through the mills, in fact it was worth nothing at all. Our reply was brief and decided, that no such coffee had ever been sent them : the cartmen had sold the coffee, filled the bags up with this rubbish, which they declared had been loaded them, on the estate ; and that no sample was given. The final result of the affair was, that the contractor had to put up the value of the coffee, which, without his signature on the cart-note, would have been lost. But we suspect contractors had ways and means of securing themselves against losses, which probably we were ignorant of, and as no doubt they did lose, at times : perhaps not so much, eventually, as was supposed, as it was not likely they would entrust property to people, of whom they knew nothing, or could give them no security ; of course they lost to some extent, but their gains were out of all proportion, as compared with the loss.

Mr. John replied to his friend's request, "Twenty bushels. It will leave none for my own issue next rice day, but if you promise to pay it before the first, you can take." Of course Mr. Toms promised, for his rice carts were sure to be up. The first arrived, but Toms' rice carts did n't : but Johns did, and demanded his rice, his coolies were kicking up a row, but Toms said he could not pay what he had not got, and it thus happened, that if the borrowers were to be pitied the lenders were even worthy of more compassion, for to oblige a neighbour, whose carts were sure to arrive, he had fixed himself in a difficulty, from which it was impossible to escape. Mr. John and Mr. Toms had a long consultation, as to what could be done, and could not decide, until at last a coolie came rushing up to the verandah, and all he could utter, for want of breath, was "*arisi*," The man who had been sent to look for Mr. Toms' carts had found them, close at hand, would be up this evening. Mr. John now knew he would get back his twenty bushels, and a sound sleep that night had

P. D. MILLIE.

THE CEYLON MUHAMMADANS.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE MOORMEN OF CEYLON AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS—THE POPULATION OF THE WORLD—THE KORAN AND SOME EXTRACTS FROM IT—RELIGIOUS TOLERATION AND PERSECUTION—HASSAN TAMBİ—MİLE-POSTS, AND AN ACCIDENT THROUGH THE AGE OF ONE—A SIGN IN THE HEAVENS, AND WHAT IT BETOKENED—A MIRACULOUS SPRING—HASSAN'S MEDITATIONS ON THE SUBJECTS OF HOUSE ERECTION AND WIVES—HIS INTERVIEW WITH "MASTER"—THE FAULT OF SPEAKING TOO MUCH—A FREQUENT CAUSE OF DISCONTENT—AN INTERCHANGE OF "LUCKPENNY"—HASSAN'S MODE OF CARRYING ON BUSINESS—MAJOR OSBORN ON ISLAMISM—THE "DOSEH" AT CAIRO—OUTWARD FORMS OF RELIGION—WHERE HASSAN TAMBİ PUT HIS LUCKPENNY—CONCLUSION AND CONCLUDING REMARKS.

Muhammadans, or, as they are more generally designated in Ceylon, Moormen, in Ferguson's Directory for 1871-72 are numerically estimated at 134,000,* and are a distinct race of people altogether from either the Sinhalese or Tamils, although sections of them may be found partially mixed up with both, more especially with the latter. But we cannot undertake to lay before the readers the original history of this class of people, or how they first established themselves in the country. The general features of the race are more akin to those of the Tamils, than Sinhalese, in every respect, only they are of much stronger make, in every way much more muscular, and most persevering in the acquisition of money, which, as a rule, seems to be their chief aim and object in life. In this respect, as the Jews are in Europe, so are the Moormen in Ceylon, keen, cunning, and eager in accumulating money, which, when once obtained, is as perseveringly retained, whatever their wealth may be, pretending poverty, just as hard and intent upon making an extra penny upon what has already yielded them many hundred per cent of profit, as if the whole profit of the day's transaction was only to consist of that penny.

The present population of the world has been roughly estimated thus :—

Christians of all denominations, actual						}	... 335,000,000
and nominal							
Jews	...	...	...	...	...	...	5,000,000
Muhammadans	...	...	...	...	...	...	160,000,000
Heathens or Pagans	...	...	...	...	...	...	200,000,000
Asiatic Buddhists	...	...	...	...	...	...	600,000,000
							1,300,000,000

* The regular census of 1871 gave 30,000 nearly above our estimate, the exact number being 163,516.—ED. C.O.

and, reckoning the average death-rate at one in every forty people, 32,000,000 yearly, or rather more than one human being dies every second, and more than one is born.

As the Bible is to the Christian, so is the Koran to the Muhammadan, and if both of these would respectively walk up to, or more in accordance with, these books, they would, severally and generally, be better conducted than they are; but it is often the case, not only with these but religionists in general, men profess what they fail to practice. There can be no mistake at all about the Koran being a book not only written in the East but written for eastern people. The whole style of it is most thoroughly Asiatic. It consists of 114 chapters, many of them very short and pithy, to which is appended, as a sort of preface, what is called "The Preliminary Discourse," giving a description of the Arabs, before Muhammad, as it is termed "during the time of ignorance," their history, religion, learning, and customs. The first chapter of the Koran is very short, and we give it here in full:—"Praise be to God, the Lord of all creatures, the most merciful, the king of the day of judgment. Thee do we worship, and of thee do we beg assistance. Direct us in the right way, in the way of those to whom thou hast been gracious, not of those against whom thou art incensed, nor of those who go astray." The last chapter, the 114th, is equally short, and is this:—"Say, I fly for refuge unto the Lord of men, the king of men, the God of men, that he may deliver me from the mischief of the whisperer who slyly withdraweth, who whispereth evil suggestions into the breasts of men, from genii and men."

Here also is an extract from chapter 22nd:—"Thus do we send down the Koran, being evident signs, for God directeth whom he pleaseth. As to the true believers, and those who judaize, and the Sabians, and the Christians, and the Magians, and thaidolaters, verily God shall judge between them on the day of resurrection. For God is witness of all things. Dost thou not perceive that all creatures, both in heaven and on earth, adore God, and the sun, and the moon, and the stars, and the mountains, and the trees, and the beasts, and many men. But many are worthy of chastisement, and whosoever God shall render despicable, there shall be none to honour, for God doth that which he pleaseth. These are two opposite parties, who dispute concerning their Lord, and they who believe not shall have garments of fire fitted unto them, boiling water shall be poured on their heads, their bowels shall be dissolved thereby,

and also their skins, and they shall be beaten with maces of iron. So often as they shall endeavour to get out of hell, because of the anguish of their torments, they shall be dragged back into the same, and their tormentors shall say unto them, Taste ye the pains of burning. God shall introduce those who believe and act righteously into gardens, through which rivers flow; they shall be adorned therein with bracelets of God, and pearls, and their vestures therein shall be silk. They are directed into a good saying, and are directed into the honourable way. But those who shall disbelieve, and obstruct the way of God, and hinder men from visiting the holy temple of Mecca, which we have appointed for a place of worship unto all men."

"All sorts of cattle are allowed you to eat, except what hath been read unto you in former passages of the Koran to be forbidden, but depart from the abomination of idols, and avoid speaking that which is false." (See! Hear!!—P. D. M.) Then see this, the commencement of chapter the 83rd:—"Woe unto you, who give short measure or weight, who, when they receive by measure from other men, take the full, but when you measure unto them, or weigh unto them, defraud!"

Chapter 4th presents some curious features of instruction in regard to women, commencing:—"Oh, men, fear your Lord who hath created you out of one man, and out of him created his wife, and from them two hath multiplied many men and women, who have borne you, for God is watching over you. And give the orphans, when they come to age, their substance, and render them not in exchange bad for good, and devour not their substance, by adding it to your substance, for this is a great sin. And if ye fear that ye shall not act with equity towards orphans of the *female sex*, take in marriage of such other women as please you, two, or three, or four, *and not more*. But if ye fear that ye cannot act equitably *towards so many*, marry one *only*, or the slaves which ye shall have acquired. This will be easier, that ye swerve not from righteousness, and give women their dowry freely, but, if they voluntarily remit unto you any part of it, enjoy it, with satisfaction and advantage, and give not unto those who are weak of understanding the substance which God hath appointed you to preserve for them, and maintain them throughout, clothe them, and speak kindly to them, and examine the orphans, until they attain the age of marriage. But if ye perceive they are able to manage their affairs well, deliver their substance unto them, and waste it not extravagantly, or hastily, because they

grow up. Let him who is rich abstain entirely from the orphan's estate, and let him who is poor take thereof, according to what shall be reasonable. And when ye deliver their substance unto them call witnesses thereof in their presence. God taketh sufficient account of your actions. Men ought to have a part of what their parents and kindred leave behind them, when they die, and women also ought to have a part of what their parents and kindred leave, whether it be little or whether it be much, a determinate part is due to them, and when they who are of kin are present at the dividing of what is left, and also the orphans and the poor, distribute to them some part thereof, and if the estate be too small, at least speak comfortably unto them.

“Surely they who devour the possessions of orphans unjustly shall swallow down nothing but fire into their bellies, and shall boil in raging flames. God hath thus commanded you concerning your children. A male shall have as much as the share of two females, but if they be female only, and above two in number, they shall have two-third parts of what the deceased shall leave, and if there be but one, she shall have the half, and the parents of the deceased shall have each of them a sixth part of what he shall leave, if he have a child, but if he have no child, and his parents be his heirs, then his mother shall have the third part, and if he have brethren his mother shall have a sixth part, after the legacies which he shall bequeath, and his debts be paid. Ye know not whether your parents or your children be of greater use to you. This is an ordinance from God, and God is knowing and wise. Moreover ye may claim half of what your wives shall leave, if they have no issue, but if they have issue, then ye shall have the fourth part of what they shall leave, after the legacies which they shall bequeath, and the debts *be paid*, &c., &c. These are the statutes of God, and whoso obeyeth God and his apostle, God shall lead him into gardens wherein rivers flow, they shall continue therein for ever, and this shall be great happiness. But whoso disobeyeth God, and his apostle, and transgresseth his statutes, God shall cast him into hell-fire; he shall remain therein for ever, and he shall suffer a shameful punishment. Men shall have the pre-eminence above women, because of those advantages wherein God hath caused the one of them to excel the other, and for that which they expend of their substance, in maintaining their wives. The honest women are obedient, careful in the absence of their husbands, for that God preserveth them. But if they shall be obedient unto you, seek not an occasion of quarrel against them,

for God is high and great, and, if ye fear a breach between the husband and wife, send a judge out of her family; if they shall require a reconciliation God will cause them to agree, for God is knowing and wise. Serve God, and associate no creature with him, and show kindness unto parents, and relations, and orphans, and the poor, and your neighbour who is of kin to you, and also your neighbour who is a stranger, and to your familiar companion, and the traveller, and the captives whom your right hand shall possess. For God loveth not the proud, or vainglorious, who are covetous, and conceal that which God in his bounty has given them (we have prepared a shameful punishment for the unbelievers), and who bestow their wealth in charity, to be observed of men, and believe not in God, nor in the last day. And whoever hath Satan for a companion, an evil companion hath he! Oh true believers, come not to prayers when ye are drunk, until ye understand what ye say." (It is related, that, before the prohibition of wine. Abd'ulrahman Ebn Awf made an entertainment, to which he invited several of the apostle's companions, and after they had eaten and drunk, plentifully, the hour of evening prayer being come one of the company rose up to pray, but, being overcome with liquor, made a shameful blunder in reciting a passage of the Koran, whereupon, to prevent the danger of any such indecency for the future, this passage was revealed.) "Verily those who disbelieve our signs, we will surely cast to be boiled in hell fire; so often as their skins shall be well burned, we will give them other skins in exchange, that they may taste the sharper torment, for God is mighty and wise. But those who believe and do that which is right, we will bring into gardens watered by rivers, therein they shall remain for ever, and there shall they enjoy wives free from all impurity, and we will lead them into perpetual shades."

But we need not go on with quotations from the Koran: enough has been given as specimens, and we would recommend all who have much dealing with the followers of the Prophet to purchase the book, and read it, and beforehand we will promise, that we do not in the least fear that it will convert you. Look round to your stable door, and watch that brilliant chanticleer, see how diligently he is scraping away at that heap, to the right and left, behind him, he throws out and away the useless chaff and rubbish, but mark his eyes, how it glitters, when he perceives a few grains, it may be only one, of rice: he actually chuckles, seizes hold of, and bolts it, then looks round with a complacent cackle of satisfaction, diligently com-

menacing to scrape and look for more. Take a lesson from that fowl, and you will turn up a few grains, perhaps a good many, of rice, in the Koran. "How very dreadful," some may burst out with. "Have you, do you read the Koran?" Yes, we have, actually have kept a Koran, and often referred to it, just for the purpose of becoming acquainted with the habits and ideas of a body of men, with whom it was necessary to hold considerable intercourse, having ever found it an essential necessity for success in any calling, to have some knowledge, in every respect, of the habits and opinions of those with whom we have had to do. For no good, but much evil, has frequently resulted, from crossing, thwarting a man, or body of men, in his, or their, religious belief, and a considerable amount of policy is often requisite in order to cause and promote a smooth running current, in this respect, in the stream of life, especially in a country like Ceylon, where we are necessarily compelled to employ labourers of so many different castes and religions. If we cannot (as indeed how can we?) respect their religion, we need not hold the man in disrespect, because he respects his own belief: the fact that he does so, instead of lowering him in our own opinion, should have quite the contrary effect, and raise him. For, however absurd the tenets of any religion or creed may appear in our own opinion, the man who acts consistently and conscientiously, in walking up to them, in accordance with the light given to him, is, as a man, worthy at all events of our toleration. No country, no separate individual, in the world, in any age, or time, has ever permanently enjoyed any measure of ultimate prosperity, who was intolerant in religion, or endeavoured to coerce and force his opinions upon others who differed from him, for it is a curious fact that all coercive measures which have ever been used in attempting the adoption of any belief have not only fallen utterly short of their purpose, but eventually recoiled on the heads of the aggressors, to the ultimate detriment of the faith which they were so bent on enforcing. And it is the same way with sects and sections of any belief: if you wish them to grow and prosper, persecute them! Persecution on any cause, in which we have very decided opinions, calls forth into practice all the energies of the mind, which otherwise, under the stagnant calm of prosperity, would lie dormant. Just take Scotland, as an instance of this: what chiefly tended to strengthen and consolidate the Presbyterian forms of faith in the country? Just the persecutions to which they were at one time subjected. The more you persecute, vex, or annoy, any, on

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the subject of their religious belief or opinions, is just driving in the nail, instead of loosening it, for in this respect we must calmly appeal to the reasoning powers of the mind, for the points of a man's faith are qualities of the mind, not of matter. How little is this often thought of, and how often is the hambone stuck under the nostrils of the Moslem, or some other bone down the throat of the Christian, under the apparent idea that he must be wrong in his mind, incompetent to judge for himself, all because his opinions differ from yours. Who has given us different powers and qualities of mind? "Who maketh us to differ?" Consider this well, before assuming the responsible position of judging others, on their matters of conscientious belief, or church government, even any of its forms. There is such a diversity of opinion in the minds of men, that unanimity of opinion in all matters of religious belief or church government is impossible: there is always a something, as the following verse states of the Moslem.

‘ But still he’s not a happy man,
He must obey the Al-Koran;
Nor durst he taste one drop of wine.
I would not then his lot were mine.”

(From an old song, "The Pope and Sultan.")

Hassan Tambi was in his faith a true Muhammadan and by trade a mason. Where he came from none knew, and, as he never would tell, when the question was put to him, it was very tolerable certainty that none would ever know. He was a very quiet, reserved man, just one of the sort who act upon the principle of hearing every possible piece of news and scandal, but never telling any: in fact, one who kept his own counsel, and neither required nor desired any counsellors. A strong-minded self-reliant man was Hassan Tambi. The first time he was ever seen or heard of was at Gampola, where he rested, on his way into the coffee districts, to push his fortune. He had no plans laid at all, in regard to where he was going. So it was just a matter of chance, or, as he himself said, "kismet," that he crossed the ferry, and proceeded onwards, towards Pussellawa and Ramboda. When he came to the 31st mile-stone—no, there were no mile-stones then, only wooden posts stuck in the ground with the letters carved out in the wood, which after a few years got so rotten as sometimes to tumble over, or, if they did not, the letters were so defaced that the travelling stranger would be very much puzzled, as to the distance he had come; but the knowing residents did not require the figures for their information, for, being well aware of the precarious condition of the posts, when they did pass one with the figures plainly marked, made good note of the circumstance, and so,

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guessing at the number of miles they must have travelled, also made a guess at what the number of the mile-post, ought to be. When these posts got very rotten, a passing coolie would give it a good shake, and, if it gave way, he would shoulder the mile-post, and carry it off for firewood ; and we have a very distinct recollection of once, when riding along, seeing a coolie with a heavy load of bottles on his head, probably beer, or brandy, for master's use, approach a mile-post upon which to rest his burden, and so ease his load for a little time. Both his hands were raised to each side of the load ; slowly he bent his head towards the top of the mile-post, upon which the load reclined, his hand and arm resting on the top, and probably his own weight also, when smash went the mile-post, given way at the bottom, where it was rotten, and the road was strewn with broken bottles. "Swamie !" screamed out the coolie, "whatever shall I do?" and he sat down on his hind-legs, and buried his face in the palms of his hands. Being moved with compassion at his disconsolate state, we drew bridle, and spoke to him. He said, his master had sent him to Kandy for supplies of liquor, he believed for a social gathering, that would take place on the estate that very evening. When he told the sad tale, he would not be believed, he would be beaten, his pay would be stopped, and three months were due him. Here, he became so overcome, that he lay down in a temporary faint, but whether it was the idea of there being no liquor for the social gathering, or the loss of three months' pay, that so severely affected him, was doubtful. Upon being asked who was his master, he mentioned the name of an intimate acquaintance, so, having compassion upon the poor man, we pulled out a pocket-book, and wrote on a blank leaf the statement of the whole occurrence, as it was personally seen, handed it to the coolie, explaining to him what it meant, and that upon his presenting it to his master he would be exonerated from all blame, without the shadow of a suspicion ; and the grateful light that gleamed in that coolie's eyes gladdened our heart, on proceeding on our way. These wooden mile-posts, instead of guiding the traveller as to the distance he had to go, would sometimes deceive him : if a part had fallen down, and been concealed in the long grass, or, if it had been pulled up and carried away, the stranger would begin to think the miles very long, until, suddenly coming upon one in good order, he would find he had travelled two or three miles, during the time he had been under the impression he had not gone over one. As times improved, more attention was paid to these mile-posts, and when signs of decay com-

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menced they were renewed by fresh ones, before the old ones had become useless, or worse than useless, In course of time, permanent stones were set up, and now the old-fashioned wooden mile-post is rarely, if ever, seen. So, when Hassan Tambi came to the 31st mile-post, on the road from Kandy to Nuwara Eliya, which stood just a little off the lower side of the road, amongst some short grass, he stopped to rest, and leaned against it. Far away off, in front, was the Ramboda pass, where the road zigzags up, shewing the red earth cutting, passing under the Kondegala rock, which projects, frowning, out of the jungle ; it turned a corner, and was lost to sight, amongst a dense dark mass of thick mist, "Mashallah !" he exclaims, "if I follow that road, where will it take me to, for it seems to run through and beyond the clouds !" Just then a loud crash of falling trees reached his ears. He looked up, and saw a long straight perpendicular line of rock, underneath which was a large extent of forest, and in that forest there appeared a small opening. Another crash took place, and the opening became larger, and Hassan Tambi became at once aware, that a coffee estate was in process of formation, underneath that huge ledge of rock. "I will go no further," was his immediate determination, "for, wherever the axe of the infidel resounds, there is sure to be plenty of rupees." As he gazed up upon that dark line of rock, his eye caught a dark rent in it, which ran right up from the bottom to the top ; it was surmounted by a dense dark line of jungle growing on the top of the rock, requiring little stretch of the imagination in giving the idea of a huge cross, and as he gazed the last quarter of the moon was dimly seen against the blue sky above all. Hassan Tambi clasped his hands, and said, "Oh favoured man that I am, a miracle, a sign in the heavens, intended to guide me, in my course of action, for is not this, the Crescent above the Cross ? The will of Allah is revealed ! I will remain here, and despoil that infidel of his silver, for all things are lawful to the true believer. Truly I will have goodly portion of spoil !" He now unfastened a cloth which was bound round his waist, loosened a knot in it, from which he took his money, and commenced to count it. The result was soon arrived at, far sooner than was pleasant, for a lengthened process of counting cash betokens a lengthened amount of cash to count. One, two, three, four, five. Five small copper challies was the whole sum : one half-penny and one eighth of a penny, for eight challies go to the penny. "The will of Allah is confirmed," he again remarks, as he again knotted up the small coins, tighter than ever. "I can go no

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further, for my pecuniary resources are reduced so low, as to be altogether insufficient for even the purchase of a cup of coffee."

Being now firmly convinced that it was his fate to remain on this spot, he walked about on the upper side of the high-road, amongst the tall mana grass and spaces of short green turf, looking out for a site for a dwelling, which was fixed upon just immediately above and within a few steps of the high-road. Then, it was necessary to find out where there was any water, so he went to some distance further back, in search a nor was he unsuccessful, for he soon came upon ; small swamp, in the centre of which bubbled up a clear and pure spring, around which were many foot-marks of elk, deer, and also of elephants, and it was quite evident that his were the first human feet that had ever approached that spring. So he said, "Oh spring, springing forth in this lonely wild, I will consecrate thee for the use and benefit of all true believers," and he stooped down, and drank thereof. In doing so, his long flowing beard had obstructed the flow of water, so that, after he had finished his drink, it babbled forth with increased force ; but this very natural result was attributed to a very different cause, viz. to another "sign." So he said, "This spring will never dry up, but will ever remain, in memory of this important event." And his words were true, for even to this day the passing traveller along the high-road can easily take notice, that on the steep bank, just above the bridge that spans the Katukitul Ela, is a sort of swampy marsh, down which a small stream of water trickles, which, if he takes the trouble to trace to its source, can be traced to a spring, on the top of the bank. That spring was the one which was consecrated by Hassan Tambi for the benefit of true believers, in all time to come, who still, at morning and evening tide, as they pass this bridge, halt, to wash in and drink of the water, and all Moorish women are well aware that bathing in this water adds greatly to their charms, so that it is much sought after, and used by them. They have erected a spout made of the bark of the kitul tree, placed up against the steep bank, where the water trickles down, at which, in the early morning, they bathe, and if a passing traveller along the high-road should appear in sight, suddenly, with a great rush and huddle, they will all start up and run in, below the bridge, until he has turned the corner, and gone out of sight. Once upon a time, on sauntering along this road, in the cool of the early morning, before the sun had risen over the high rock above, we became aware that a number of Moorish women were bathing at the spout. They caught sight of us, as we

approached the spot, and suddenly, leaving all their clothes at the spring, or rather spout, which proceeded from it, made a rush and dart underneath the bridge. We stopped, just on the centre of the bridge, rested on its railings, pulled out a pipe, and commenced to smoke, and admire the beautiful scenery all down the valley, streaked with thin and varied shades of the mists of the early morning. This, those under the bridge were unconscious of, and, no doubt, thinking the unbeliever had passed on his way, came out to resume their bath, and dresses. But, on perceiving a man, and an infidel, seated upon the railing of the bridge, they all uttered a loud scream, and again rushed under the place of refuge. So, having great respect for the feelings of the ladies, we made a great noise on the bridge, looked the other way, and moved off. Indeed, as a young man, in these times, our behaviour in these delicate matters quite won for us the esteem of the ladies, until they did not become in the least afraid, and considered it altogether unnecessary either to conceal their faces in their cloths, on our approach, on to turn round their backs until we had passed on.

Hassan now walked leisurely about amongst the grass, to examine the slope of the land, in order to ascertain the possibility of leading the water from this spring down to the side upon which he had determined to build a house, and found that the ground all sloped down towards the road, and that easily, without the least difficulty, it could be done. So, he looked up the hill, and saw, a good way off, just touching the edge of the felled forest, and where these were already a few acres of coffee planted, a small bungalow, in which, he rightly concluded, dwelt the master, so he thought he would just walk up to it, not to ask the master's consent to build a house, but to ask him for timber and grass, and also coolies to do so. "And a cool fellow this certainly was," the reader will say. But do not speak too soon, for it will soon be shewn, that Hassan, instead of asking a favour, endeavoured to prove to that master that he was doing him a very great one, in coming to settle and build a house upon his land, and that he expected every assistance from him, in timber, grass, and coolies, in doing so; and being in a thinking frame of mind, the thought just struck him, that some wives would be useful in many ways. One would be apt to droop, feel lonely and dull in this desolate wild; two would be sure to quarrel, and thus, instead of proving a comfort to himself, would prove an infinite source of annoyance; so, under the circumstances, he must necessarily take three, for, if two of them quarrelled, the third would step in as a mediation and make

peace; if two of them began to plot, scheme, or put in practice mischief, the third would be sure to come, and reveal everything to him. Now, was not this Hassan a man of great force and decision of character, for here had he laid all his plans, about building a house, and taking three wives, with only three-eighths of a penny in cash in his possession! And the last thing he did, after revolving all these schemes in his mind, was, what the reader might naturally suppose should have been the first, to walk up to the bungalow and interview the master. There was no road up, only a steep watercourse sort of track, that led right up the grass hill, which, from the constant run of rain water in it, was more like a rugged rut, formed into steps and stairs, than anything else, but Hassan manfully accomplished the climb, and cautiously approached the bungalow. After peeping and peering through some shrubs, he said, "Yes, master is in the verandah," to which he walked up in a timid respectful manner, entered, and, after making a most profound obeisance, said, "Allah be praised, I have found whom my soul loveth to honour, at last! After a long and weary search, the desire of my heart is satisfied," and he clasped his hands under his long beard, and looked up into—the roof of the verandah. The master, a very young man, only a short time arrived, stared, in a sort of stupid astonishment, and said, "What do you mean? What do you know about me, or what have you been seeking me for?" So, after a few groans and invocations, Hassan bowed his head, and said, "It was reported in my country that your name had been seen in an English newspaper, as having sailed for Ceylon. When I heard this, I said, 'This is the young man of whom I have been warned in a dream, that I was to be to him as a father, and he was to act towards me as a dutiful and loving son,' and now when mine eyes rest upon you, behold, I see the very face and figure. Lo, I hear the very voice, as I saw, and as I heard, in my dream. My son, comfort and support me, in my poverty." "The man is undoubtedly mad," thought the young man: "I must try and humour him." "Well," says he. "the best support in poverty is self-support, and the best comfort a good night's sleep, after a hard day's work. Go away, support and comfort yourself." But Hassan replied, "A machine for pulping coffee may be exact. quite perfect, in every respect, quite a model of skilful engineering, but, for all that, is of no more use than an old barrel, if there is no propelling force to drive it, be it of steam, water, or hand-power. I am like unto a first-rate pulper, with teeth and chops all properly set, standing here on the pulping platform

of the verandah, quite ready to take in any amount of ripe *palam*, throw off all the skin and refuse into master's pulp-pit, and stow away all the good heavy coffee into my own receiving cistern, but am of no use at all, until master puts forth his hands, and turns round the handles!" "But what is the use of me, or to me, in driving a pulper, if I am to receive nothing for my trouble but useless pulp, and all the fine coffee is to drop into your receiving cistern, which, it is very evident, will entail an infinite amount of work, in order to fill, if indeed it is possible ever to fill it?" very reasonably asks the young man. "Your fine flowery-worded oriental simile is quite untenable and absurd." "Not so," gravely replies Hassan, "the young man looks mainly to the present, the future is yet a far way off, but every day becomes nearer, until it not only supplants the present but lapses into the past. Then, if it has been neglected or held in small estimation, it cannot be recalled, even as coffee pulp washed down the stream can never be gathered up again. Do not let your pulp run down the stream, save it up in heaps for manure, and when, with other composts, it is applied to the trees, you will have to increase and enlarge the receiving cistern." "For *your* special benefit and profit," grimly replied master; "but if you will not tell me at once what you want, and be quick about it, just you be off out of this, for I have neither time nor inclination to spend in listening to all this rubbishing talk." So, Hassan, seeing that the turning-point had come, cleared his throat and said, "There are a great many coolies on the estate, and no bazars near at hand to supply them with curry-stuffs and other necessities, and I am ready to start a bazar down at the road-side. I will be at all the expense of building it myself; all that will be required from the estate is leave to do so, also leave to carry sticks from the new clearing, and cut mana grass for thatch, and, master know very well, both sticks and grass are so plentiful, as to be no object at all. I must have a few of the estate coolies to assist me, but, of course, will pay them myself. Nor will the benefit be wholly on my side: just see, how convenient it will be to yourself. The post-runner from Kandy to Nuwara Eliya passes the very place, so, instead of sending to and bringing from Pussellawa post letters, a distance of seven miles, they will be delivered at and taken away from the estate. Then, you can build a rice store, and, when carts come with rice, I will measure in, and report the full amount received, and what is deficient, as also, on the day of rice issue to the

coolies. I will do all that, even keep the key and be responsible for everything in the store; as also, when the coffee crop comes on,—and, under master's very skilful and wise management, it is certain to be very large,—I will take charge of the despatching, count all the bags, and load them in the carts, so that you will have nothing to do but sit in your verandah, and I will bring up the cartmen to sign their way-bills. All this and a good deal more will be done, merely for permission to build a house at my own expense on a waste pice of useless land of no use to any one! Besides, by trade I am a mason, these men are difficult to be had, and I am always ready to do any work in this way at the usual pay, at any time, when ordered." Here, he looked at the walls of the house, and said, "The bungalow is not plastered." He folded his hands bent his head respectfully, and retired a little, feeling perfectly assured that he had said enough. How comparatively few there are who know when they have said enough. People, as a rule, injure them selves and their own interests a great deal more by speaking too much than by speaking too little. The great secret of talking is to know when to stop, and, just as you do stop, to say something to the purpose, whether it be on business, pleasure, or the usual routine of social intercourse. Talking too much, like "too late," can never be recalled. Talking too little, like "too soon," is easily rectified in the future. Go, ye great talkers, depart, like Hassan Tambi, after you have expounded the drift of your argument, if you have any drift at all. If you want to say, "The bungalow is not plastered," or anything else, out with it, and don't beat about the bush so much, or be so long of saying it, as if it was something you were ashamed to mention. making mountains of molehills, and mysteries of trifles. But the real fact is this: just as it is said of those who are fond of liquor, anything and everything is sure to be an excuse for a drink, so also, on the very same reasoning, anything and everything, to the great talker, is sure to be an excuse for a talk. Being utterly forgetful, that, as there is a time, place, and season for everything, so also are there for talking, the great talker, of whatever colour, class, or caste, he may be, very often defeats his own purpose, he irritates and annoys his hearer, and, to put it briefly, if he only said less about the subject at issue, his hearer would understand him, and all about it, much better. It is an old Latin proverb, that "The man is wise who speaks little," but we think that the Scotch one is much more

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pointed and to the purpose, which is, "The quiet sow eats all the dreg." Not that men are to be expected, or wished, never to speak, or swine never to grunt, but just that it is excessively disagreeable if the former are always speaking, or the latter always grunting, and is always sure to result in the former never being attended to, even when he is saying anything of unusual importance, and the poor pig may be shoved away from the feeding trough by his stronger fellows, and get thin, lean, and lank, for want of food, no attention whatever being paid to him, just merely because he is always grunting and squeaking, which of course means nothing at all, except making a noise and turmoil.

The young man walked up and down the verandah as he muttered to himself, "The bungalow is not plastered." He raised his eyes to the wall, and, for the first time, felt some annoyance that it was not. And it is frequently just so in every condition of life, in many other ways. If we are quite contented and cheerful in our temporary position, a friend, it may be, to answer some purpose of his own, or, more likely, just for the sake of talking and showing forth his superior wisdom and talents, will suggest something, pass some casual remark, that this or that ought to be done, and thus, the attention being called to the subject, we wonder why we had never noticed it before, make up our mind to have it done, and, if, from any reasons, are prevented from doing it, suddenly become very unhappy. Such is the strange action of the mind, in causing unhappiness. Then, when one little comfort or convenience is acquired, it just leads to a craving for another. Supposing the walls to be all plastered, then, you are sure immediately to find out, you must have a ceiling, or a new one; and, when this is done, why, the old flooring looks bad, it must be renewed; and then, nothing else will serve you, but to have the verandah all laid down with polished lime; all this trouble and expense being brought on, by a friend making some trifling remark about some repair the house required. Then again, the man who made the remark, "The house is not plastered," was a mason, and in search of employment. He said so, without the most remote idea of noticing your interests, but solely and wholly with a keen eye of perception for his own! And so, take warning from this, and always suspect, that when any one gives you any particular advice about your own affairs, without your having so much as asked his opinion on the subject, that your own benefit and interest is only a pretence and cloak, under which are concealed designs, which he would

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fain carry out, for his own special benefit. Do not be in a hurry about taking his advice, for you may very correctly guess that the indirect, apparently very disinterested hints, thrown out, may just mean one for you, and two for himself. Remember, it is for the personal interest of a mason to say, "The house is not plastered." But in order that we may not be accused of lapsing into a cynical frame of mind, this remark may be qualified, by stating that there are few rules without exceptions, and the great difficulty in life is the same as that in grammar, to know when to make the exception. Such knowledge can only be acquired and attained by study; as in grammar, so also in the various phases of life, which, on our onward progress continually present themselves before us. In this, never forget that your eyes and ears are of infinitely more importance to you than your mouth, unless you are able to use and control that tongue inside, as you would a pump. "In the web of life, the warp is born with us, it is we ourselves that cast the woof," in the casting of which, few are fully aware of the very great importance on the "shuttle" of that very small part of the machine, the tongue.

Master walked up and down the verandah for a long time, his hands clasped behind his back, his eyes fixed upon the mud floor. Hassan Tambi stood, with his hands clasped in front, his eyes also fixed upon the ground, waiting for a reply. It came, and was in his favour, for the whole of Hassan Tambi's remarks were perfectly correct, admitting of no dispute whatever. Just at this very particular juncture, he was too cunning to lay himself open to the accusation of untruth or exaggeration.

The suppliant did not shew any signs of joy, but, on the contrary, looked graver than ever, as he bowed his head, and said, "Words may be forgotten, paper agreements may be lost, the bargain must be confirmed by some tangible act or deed. I have heard that it is the custom with your people, on the clinching of a bargain, to give and take money, sometimes called luckpenny. Let us act in accordance with the customs of your countrymen, in proof that both of us will stand to our bargain. Let us exchange a luckpenny: in fact, some money: here is mine," and he counted out upon the table his $\frac{5}{8}$ of a penny, which master swept up, in a sort of amused, off-hand way, put in his pocket saying, "All right, off you go." But nothing was further from Hassan Tambi's intention, than going off, without his luckpenny, so he said, "Master has taken my coin, and given none in return. As copper in value is to me,

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so is gold to master. As master has taken five of my copper coins, even so must he give unto me, in return, five gold pounds, not as a gift, as I have most freely and cheerfully given my luckpence, in proof of my liberality and full trust in the most honourable and upright character of our immaculate lord and governor, but merely as an advance, to be afterwards deducted from my account, for all the coconuts, salt fish, and curry stuffs, which master must take from my shop." After this rather tinkling request, or rather demand, of course a great deal of talking ensued, the purport of which need not be entered into, it being merely sufficient to state that, when Hassan Tambi entered that bungalow verandah, he was in possession of five small coins, and nearly an hour afterwards, when he went out, he was in possession of five pounds! And no doubt he was most feelingly alive to the common saying, that "Possession is nine points of the law," because, if, a few minutes after this occurrence, a creditor had requested payment of his account, say only a couple of rupees, he would have been most profuse in his regrets and lamentations, at having no money in his possession, having just paid to master the whole of his coin, as rent, in advance, of a small piece of land, upon which he intended to settle. As he made his salaam, and stepped briskly down the flight of wooden steps, which led from the verandah of the bungalow called "The Eagle's Nest," and as the coin rattled in his cloth something nearly approaching to the same sound was heard to rattle or chuckle in his throat, his long beard shook, and vibrated. After he was out of hearing from the bungalow, he spoke aloud, saying. "Truly, the infidel has fallen an easy prey; he was walked into the trap, mashallah. The unbeliever is young, and has a smooth face, like into a woman, and his countenance can be read. A beardless man is easily caught in the meshes spread for him. His face reflects his thoughts, and even the very working of his features, as he tries to conceal them, just throws out a more vivid impression to the keen observer. Even as the tongue of the true believer is given him to confuse, and confound his enemy, so also is his beard, to confuse his friend."

On Saturday afternoons and Sundays, he employed coolies to cut and carry sticks and grass, and the house was soon erected. He told them, he had no money to pay them, but, in return for their work, after it was done, doled out to them small pittances of dry chillies, and rotten coconuts, and, if any one complained, he became so liberal as to add a piece

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of salt fish, so far gone in decomposition, that the recipients could not eat it. He ordered and received from large bazar-holders at Gampola stocks of supplies, and said, that he had no money to pay, but, after they were sold, he would be able to meet his bills; but even after they were sold, he was still unable to do so, as the coolies had not paid him, because master had not paid them. But it may be reasonably asked, what became of the five pounds that he borrowed, for the very purpose of meeting his engagements, in opening up a shop? Who can tell? It was never seen, nor heard of, never even mentioned; possibly he kept it concealed, in some dark recess of his abode, and in the late night, when all was quiet, brought it out, and spreading it out before him, in front of the small lamp, gazed, and gloated over it, in profound admiration. But, whatever he did, or did not, one thing was certain: he neither spent it, nor paid his just debts. Probably he lent it out secretly to some of his own faith, receiving such a high rate of interest, that it went far to keep him. For five pounds, at two hundred per cent per annum would give him an annual profit of ten pounds. "Borrowing money," says he, "is the way to make it, Borrow from master, at an unlimited date, without paying him any interest at all; lend out to the same, on short periods, at two hundred per cent. That's the way to make money, and the best of all is, no personal work is required, the interest is always going on, whether you work or not. Work indeed! work is only for slaves and unbelievers." Here the long beard again shook, underneath which again a low chuckle and rattle was heard. A book has just been written by Major Osborn, in which he writes:—"The intellectual immobility of the Mahomedan world proceeds, not from the inner consciousness of the divine presence, but from the total want of it. According to the Moslem belief, the spirit of man is apart from, and incapable of converse with the spirit of God. Apart from the indications of his will, contained in the Book, and the traditions, man neither knows, nor can know anything about Him, and his ways. All search therefore into the constitution of the universe, or the mind of man, the Moslem condemns at the outset, as perfectly useless, and probably impious, and hence also, there is no creed, the inner life of which has been so completely crushed under the weight of ritual. For that deep impassable gulf which divides man from God empties all religious acts of spiritual life and meaning, and reduces them to rites and ceremonies. They are laws to be obeyed. They do not imply that a way has been opened

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out between the visible and invisible world, hence, also, there is not, nor ever has been, any 'solidarity' in Islam. The resistless sovereignty of an inscrutable God has obliterated the notion of progress, and effectually prevented the idea of a national life from coming into existence. God is supreme. What he wills can only be known by what he brings to pass, and against his decree, as manifested in the progress of events, it is idle to strive. The Prophet knew of no religious life, where the external rite was not deemed of greater importance than the inner state, and, in consequence, he gave that character to Islam also. Hence, there are no moral gradations in the Koran. All precepts proceed from the will of God and all are enforced with the same threatening emphasis, a failure of performance in the meanest trivialities of civil life involves the same tremendous penalties as apostacy or idolatry. In the traditions this moral confusion is even more apparent. These traditions are a record of the answers and acts of the Prophet in response to the inquiries of his followers, and those who have not studied them know nothing whatever of the true spirit of Islam. There is a verse in the second Sura which says, 'God has created the whole earth for you.' The *you* means, of course, the true believers, and the whole earth has been created for their use and benefit. The whole earth they then classify under three heads: 1st, land which never had an owner; 2nd, land which had an owner, and has been abandoned; 3rd, the persons and the property of the infidels. From this third division the same legists deduce the legitimacy of slavery, piracy, and a state of perpetual war between the faithful and the unbelieving world. These are methods whereby the Moslem enters into the possession of his God-given inheritance. The Moslem does not persecute a Christian on account of his religion, because the difference of religion makes the latter, his slave. This single fact throws a startling light on the causes of the decadence of the Mahomedan world. Since the death of the Prophet, Islam has not been so much a religion as a barbarous code of laws, which consign those who reject them to hopeless political servitude, and, as divine, scornfully rejects the possibility of improvement from within. Wherever the Mahomedan conqueror penetrates, he enforces this code, in all its unmitigated barbarism. It has been urged in praise of Islam that it has proved more potent than Christianity in eradicating national differences, and imposing upon all its votaries a single type of character. Precisely this has been the reason of its baneful power. It achieves uniformity because intellectual and moral stagnation follow in its wake,

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it destroys diversities of character because these are the result of life and growth, and within the sphere of Islam, life and growth are impossible. There is a dismal identity in the decrepitude and corruption in all Mahomedan lands, which points to a common parentage." Major Osborn shews that shutting out human reason, the huge and laborious collections of traditions, have crushed to death thought, freedom, and progress, in the Muhammadan world. Yet there are decent, even intelligent Englishmen who believe in Midhat Pasha, and his constitution reforming the Turkish! In Cairo, when the pilgrims return from Mecca, a high holiday is held in honour of the birth-day of the Prophet. They hold great camp meetings every night in large tents, erected in a field not far from the Frank quarter of the town. The tents are of various sorts and sizes, some very richly adorned, and large enough to hold about 200 people. The devotees are as different, as the tents: Turks, Arabs, Negroes stand side by side, engaged in the strange devotions, and calling with equal fervour on their common Allah. On the last day of the ceremonies, the crowning feature is the ceremony of the "Doseh," which consists in the pilgrim fanatics forming with their bodies a pavement of flesh and bone for the holy sheikh, and his sacred horse. the whole of the city is early astir, and carriages, hired for the day at fancy prices, throng along to the encampment. What a sea of faces, all in anxious expectation. At length is the cry, "They come!" and down comes a long stream of turbaned devotees; they prostrate themselves in a row, all along the road, while many of the crowd actually assist in packing them close together, a long row of bodies, closely wedged in, lie there. A troop of pilgrims now come on, and walk over the prostrate bodies, and now comes the sheikh on horse-back. He rode calmly over the bodies of the fanatics, swaying to and fro, with each motion of his horse, just as if he was drunk. This is the "Doseh," a disgusting exhibition of Moslem fanaticism. Whenever the sheikh was past, the devotees sprang to their feet, and those who were unable to rise were carried out of sight, as soon as possible. It is maintained that no one is ever hurt by this sacred ordeal, but in many cases it is impossible to hide it. Some yell out vigorously with pain, while others, whose spines are stretched out, quite rigid, to all appearance dead altogether. The exhibition is a most disgusting and a degrading one, and leads, to some extent, in forming opinion, as to what an outburst of Moslem fanaticism means, and we have never yet been able to form any correct idea, as to why the Muhammadan religion, should

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specially and above all other forms of faith, be correctly stigmatized, as being intolerant, and fanatical, in the extreme, unless it be from the precepts in the Koran, which are as severe in denouncing, and with the greatest certainty pronouncing, frightful punishments and penalties, both in this world and in that to come, upon the unbelievers, as upon those who will only believe, the utmost extent of purely sensual gratifications. But for all that, a great many of the very ignorant amongst the masses, have no great idea of the minor principles of their faith, just in the same measure as is prevalent amongst many nominal Christians. Most of us have heard of the Madras Tamil servant, who, when questioned, as to his religious persuasion, replied, "I am a Christian," and when further questioned, as, to how, or why, he was one, said, "I eat beef, drink beer and brandy, the same as master." And just so, there are no doubt numerous good Musalmans, who if questioned in the same way, would reply, "I do not eat pork; when I pray, or recite passages of the Koran, I turn my face towards Mecca, and I abhor the infidel, using every method in my power to despoil him of his silver." These, and there are many such, are merely Musalmans because they were born and brought up in the faith, and do not know nearly so much of its correct principles and tenets as the writer himself. With the vast bulk of mankind, in every clime and region, we find the outward profession of a faith, without the systematic practice, which is just, as we may term it, a negative affirmation that they do not believe it, although were they to be so plainly accused, the accusation would meet with a most indignant denial. With such we would just calmly argue the question, if you believe it, why do you not practise it: not only so, but actually act, in direct opposition to its rules? And even where the systematic practice is rigidly adhered to, do we not very frequently find that it is all outwardly, without at all touching the spirit, or mind? The outward form, without the inward power. What would we think of a man, who was perfectly aware of his extreme poverty, who always said he knew where there was a very fine piece of land, for planting coffee, perfectly certain of it, and he also knew where he could easily procure on very easy terms money to cultivate it, and yet he did nothing, seemed quite satisfied to lounge away year after year of his life, in a small mud bungalow, *doing* nothing, only telling every one all the fine things he knew? There could be only two conclusions any man of sense could come to in his case. Either, that he was mad,

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and suffering under strange hallucination ; or, that he was relating a lot of lies, and did not for a moment himself believe what he said ! In our present times, too much stress is laid upon the form of religion, and too little, in many cases none at all, upon the power of it, a power in the mind, which like the small mainspring in the watch, regulates every action and *tick* of the curiously complicated machine. Preserve your mainspring all right, and no fear, but the watch will keep correct time. You need not be always lamenting yourself about the fine gold becoming dim, the dust getting into the crevices : that watch will not go very far wrong, as long as the mainspring is all right. If it should, at times, don't distress yourself ; give the regulator a touch, move the hands a little, and wipe the dust off its face, with the point of your silk pocket-handkerchief. The mainspring is all right. But you may be obstinate, and say, "How am I to know the mainspring is all right ? I must watch the watch, and be prepared in case it may go wrong." Do not trouble yourself at all, for if anything is wrong, even in the slightest degree, with the spring, it is not a case of "may go wrong," but a positive certainty that it is. Others, again, go upon the other extreme, and never will believe the mainspring is broken. The watch does not keep time, is actually stops, "Tuts, tuts. Bother that dust that is always getting in," and they shake the watch, wind it up, setting it agoing for a time, just merely again, soon to come to a standstill. Days, months, go on, in this very unsatisfactory way, and they never take the trouble to examine, or have examined, if the mainspring is all right ; indeed the idea never enters their mind that it can possibly be broken. Give up this silly, purposeless "dilly-dally," all ye who have watches, that wont go correctly, or keep proper time, for far better have no watch at all, than one that does not keep correct time, and always deceives you. Just as you are a very useless individual to others, if you give forth no "tick," in like manner also is that watch to you, that follows your mean and unworthy example ! Tick away, give forth "tick" to any reasonable extent, if your mainspring and regulator are all right, only don't be like that scheming Moorman, Hassan Tambi, who, after procuring "tick," make no use of it at all. For it was said, although he always declared he never had a single rupee, that, at the solemn silent midnight hour, when all was quiet and still, even the very pariah dogs, he would arise from his mats, and trim and light his humble lamp, then he would peep cautiously out of his humble dwelling to

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make perfectly certain that none were nigh at hand. He would then lift an earthen chatty, which contained boiled rice, off three small stones, on which it rested ; then he would scrape away all the burnt ashes and charcoal, the remains of the evening fire. After doing this, he would look out again, but all was black darkness. He now quickly removes a quantity of earth, from below where the ashes of the fire stood, which forms a hole, from which he draws forth an old tin canister, which contained something that rattled, and as that rattle proceeded from the old tin canister, so also did a rattle, or chuckle, again, from beneath Hassan Tambi's beard. He emptied that canister of its contents, which were fifty rupees, and he spread them out on the floor besides the small lamp. There they lay, and glittered. Hassan Tambi stretched himself out on the floor beside them, rested his head upon his hand, and his elbow on the floor ; in this position he lay for a very long time, and if any one had seen that solitary man, it would have been a question whether his eyes or the rupées glittered brightest. After he had feasted his eyes to the full, he gathered them up into the old canister, restored it to the hole, upon the top of which the ashes were again gathered up. After this soporific he sighed, rolled his blanket round him, blew out the lamp, and fell asleep.

Reader, the next time you travel along the road, from Pussellawa to Ramboda, as you cross the bridge over the Katukitul stream, just below the old site of Huntly Lodge, look up, and you will see a marsh, down which water trickles from Hassan Tambi's spring : for his words were true, it has never dried up ! You will also see the small waterfall a little above the bridge, where the Moorish women were bathing. Look up, and you will see that huge rock, with the rent in it from top to bottom, but it will not convey to you any idea of a cross now, because the tall jungle that stood on the top is all felled, long ago. Still keep looking up, and you will see a small bungalow or probably only a chimney-top, rising out of a mass of shrubs, just at the top of a steep zigzag road. As you go on, you will come to a bazar at the roadside it is not the same, but on that very site Hassan Tambi built his. Before you turn the corner, look up to the "Eagle's Nest" once more, for that was the bungalow in which Hassan Tambi exchanged $\frac{1}{2}$ of a penny for £5. But none now need accuse that young man, who is now old, of exchanging silver for copper. For that is not one of the failings of

P. D. MILLIE.

CONCLUSION.

CONCLUSION.

When the writer first commenced to record these reminiscences, it was without the most remote idea or intention of writing 48 chapters. Having been originally induced to try something of this sort, by perusing a few numbers of old memories, which appeared in the *Observer* a considerable time ago, under the heading of "The Days of Old," we have run, or rather been carried, on by old recollections, until no doubt many of the numerous readers of the *Observer* have been saying amongst themselves, "*Ad nauseam*," "Hold, enough." Besides, the subject is not a very extensive one, and is apt to lapse into a sameness, repetitions, under different forms or aspects, of which defect I am fully conscious, when reading over the chapters in print. I have to thank the Editor of the *Observer*, for the readiness with which he has always inserted these writings, as also the general readers of that newspaper for the absence of adverse criticism. Their kindness and good nature in this respect I fully appreciate, as the style of writing contains many errors, superfluities, and general imperfections. The excuse for which must be, just what our readers are already well aware of: that I have no pretensions whatever to correctness in writing for publication. How can I being "only a coffee planter, who has spent all his life amongst black people, you know"? If they have served to amuse any of my fellow planters in their lonely life, the writing of them has also been an amusement to myself, in recalling old memories, which old people love to do, and thus the persistent writing on my part, and the persistent forbearance on theirs, has perhaps afforded far more amusement to myself than to them.

It is not at all improbable that my name may again appear in the *Observer*, as a contributor, should the Editor desire it, but, if not, it is sure to appear some day, who knows how soon, as one who will contribute no more, when it appears for the *last time*. It is no use our friends saying, "Come, come, don't leave us in low spirits, after all the queer stories you have written, you are yet fresh and hearty." A man of 1844, who has spent nearly a quarter of a century in Ceylon, cannot be so foolish as but to know that his life is far spent.

Readers, farewell. It may be, "we part to meet again," and it may be not; but, if not, you may rest assured, there is one "behind the arras," who takes a lively interest in all that is going on in the land where he has sojourned so long, one who takes and ever will take a lively interest in yourselves.

Always your friend and well wisher,

P. D. MILLIE.

Edinburgh, 10th May, 1877.

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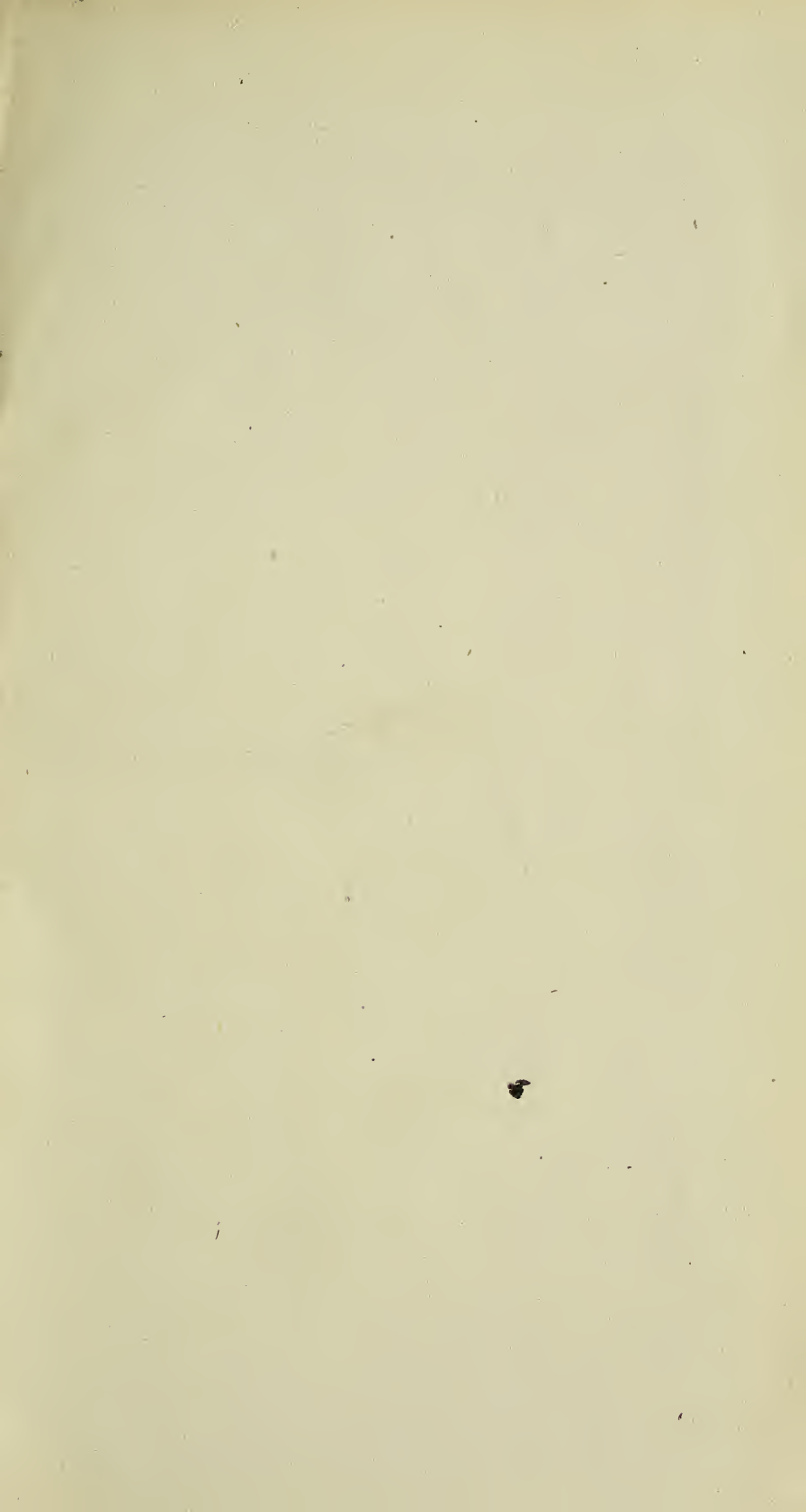
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